THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF SPORT IN CO. TIPPERARY, 1840 – 1880

PATRICK BRACKEN B.A., M.Sc. Econ.

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LEICESTER

SUPERVISORS OF RESEARCH:

FIRST SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR TONY COLLINS

SECOND SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR MIKE CRONIN

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Abbreviations

CC Clonmel Chronicle

IT Irish Times

KM Kilkenny Moderator

NG Nenagh Guardian

TFP Tipperary Free Press

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Abstract

The growth and development of sport in Co. Tipperary, 1840 to 1880, was promoted and supported by the landed elite and military officer classes. In the instances of cricket, rugby union and association football, the military were the principle agency through which these sports were disseminated among the people of Tipperary.

Sporting trends which were fashionable in Great Britain also became evident in Ireland, and by extension, Tipperary. The thesis demonstrates the emergence of these sports at a micro-level in Tipperary and the qualitative research is indicative of the trends by which they became apparent.

The degree to which horse racing and hunting to hounds became an integral aspect of the social lives of the elite class is reflected countywide. The associational culture among this class became evident in summer time recreations most notably archery, lawn tennis and cricket. Cricket was the one sport which was quickly diffused throughout the sporting community of Tipperary as it became, in the 1870s, the most prolific team sport in the county and played by all classes.

Sport took place without borders and to this end patronage was a key element of this support. There were some notable supporters who gave of their time and money to ensure that the best resources were in place to bring this about. In this respect the 3rd Marquis of Waterford was a leading figure.

The thesis clearly shows that sporting diversions continued through the traumatic famine period. As everyday life continued, so too did recreational sport. Hurling remained a part of Tipperary life and the research identifies new sources to demonstrate this. The growth and evolution of sport in Co. Tipperary, 1840-1880, is put into context with comparable studies in Ireland and Great Britain as the Victorian penchant for sport manifested itself in this part of rural Ireland. .

Introduction:

Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the growth, development and subsequent codification of recreational sport, which took place within county Tipperary between the years 1840 and 1880 inclusive. Sport and society were much more fluid than arbitrary lines on a map, so the research takes cognisance of sporting happenings elsewhere in Ireland. It includes individuals who resided outside of the county but who had a significant impact on the direction and patronage of several sports within Tipperary.

Central to the argument of this thesis is that sport in mid-Victorian Tipperary was class based. The landed elite, businessmen and military officers were the principal agents through which recreational sport in Tipperary developed. In a county devoid of industrialisation and urbanisation, the way in which sport developed, in Tipperary, was quite different to that which occurred in Dublin, Belfast, London, Manchester or Liverpool. In those cities, sport could draw on large industrial population centres for support and participation. Population growth and industry were absent in Tipperary. Yes people played sport and had done so for centuries, but the direction in which sport developed in the county was one which was principally rural based. The Victorian penchant for recreational activities, which was evident in England, soon found a steady stream of followers in Ireland. The codified games ethic, which was identified with England, ultimately came to fruition in Ireland, through diffusion and emulation. The military were a central component, with the officer class taking a lead role in the promotion of sport in Co. Tipperary. New sporting recreations, which were popular in Great Britain, became popular in Ireland, marking a transition from the traditional games of hurling and variants of folk football. This is not to say that hurling died out. Rather

this thesis argues that the opposite was the case. It was the social network of the officers commanding the garrisons and the landed elite which encouraged sport to take place. They also had control of one of the essential requirements which allowed sport to happen, which was access to land. The role of the landed class and their association with military officers is central to the growth and development of sport in Tipperary between 1840 and 1880.

Class alone is not the sole concern of this thesis. Key to understanding how recreational sport developed in Tipperary is an assessment of each of the following propositions to demonstrate how integral they were for sport to grow and expand:

- That the large scale presence of military personnel in Tipperary, many of whom were born outside of Ireland, was instrumental to the promotion, advancement and support of various recreational sports.
- That the development of an integrated rail network, which allowed for the cheap and easy construction of sporting networks, was good for recreational sport.
- That in the post-Famine period the county experienced a period of relative calm, mindful of the unrest, death and emigration which took place in the 1830s and 1840s.
- That the estate system experienced a period of sustained economic certainty during this same period, even though some estates did experience difficulties.
- That cricket became the first field game which was played countywide and was diffused among all the classes.
- That hurling, though in decline, was not as near to extinction as GAA historians would lead one to believe. Central to this argument is the use of previously under used Petty Sessions records, as a source, to identify this sport at a micro-level.
- That the period saw the emergence of popular sporting individuals, some of whom gained national and international success. Others, because of their social status or the

means by which they indulged their sporting passions, were also popular, with their presence at an event enhancing, not only the general attendance, but also the sporting occasion.

- That the period witnessed the emergence of commercialised sporting journalism, which came on the back of an increasingly literate society. This was under-pinned by the presence of eleven local newspapers, though some were of short duration.
- That female participation became widespread and recorded during the period, notably in hunting to hounds, archery, croquet and lawn tennis.
- That there was a clearly defined take-off period for sport in the county in the mid-1860s, where there was a transition from occasional fixtures and contests to a more frequent 'calendar' of competition in a range of sports.
- That the period evidenced a steady growth in the business surrounding sport. This includes the shopkeepers who carried sporting goods to meet an emerging market. It also includes the introduction of professional sportsmen into the county, to assist club development.

Each chapter features an individual who was a lead agent in the promotion or advancement of a particular recreational sport or activity. With the military this was a member of the officer class at Cahir barracks who supported hunting to hounds; Adjutant Maitland at Nenagh barracks who promoted horse racing; or Lieutenant Carr, also at Nenagh barracks who outlined the laws of the rugby code to a team of local players in 1875.[1] One man who loomed large in the hunting and horse racing scene was the 3rd Marquis of Waterford, Henry de la Poer Beresford. Chapters Two and Three demonstrate how influential he was to both activities, in the context of Tipperary sport, though he resided at Curraghmore House, in Co.

[1] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 15 Apr. 1874; *Nenagh Guardian*, 29 Dec. 1875.

Waterford. John Bagwell, landlord and conservative member for Clonmel borough, with his provision of land for sport, was also instrumental in the support and backing which he gave to various recreational sports, notably cricket, though he was never an active participant in the way that the previous gentlemen were. This in essence is one of the key themes of this thesis. The agency by which sport was administered and supported came from the landed and military officer class. As the thesis reveals, the story of each sport very much depended on the participation of key individuals.

Sport in mid-nineteenth century Tipperary was often haphazard and unregulated. This study bridges the divide from local unregulated sporting pursuits to those that became regulated and codified. In an Irish context, this can be dated to the late 1870s and early 1880s with the organisation and codification of association football, rugby union and Gaelic games. That some recreations fell out of favour and became but a sporting memory, is also an aspect of the study, which aims to demonstrate how the popularity of various sports came into prominence and then faded from popularity. In this context the term popular is used to imply the degree to which it was popular among a specific section of society. Not all members of society participated in sporting activity. The research has to take cognisance of this and note participation levels accordingly, where such can be measured. There is a limited range of genealogical source material to underpin the research.

The temporal boundaries of this study have been carefully chosen. A commencement date at 1840 was selected for a number of reasons. Pre-Famine sport in Ireland had until 2014 received sparse analysis. When it did, it was part of a widespread assessment of a sport as

viewed from a national context.[2] In writing a history of sport in Ireland, from 1600-1840, James Kelly has clearly demonstrated how the sporting environment of the country was shaped during this period.[3] To the fore in the advocacy and promotion of equine sports, blood sports, team sports, fighting sports, and to lesser extent in minority sports, were the elite of Irish society. The analysis of Kelly complements the research conducted for this thesis. The terminal date of his study dovetails with the commencement date of this research and in so doing, the gap between 1840 and 1880, at a micro level of a county administrative unit, is studied.

Pre-1880 sport, or rather pre-modern sport in Ireland, and its transition to codification, has not received much academic attention.[4] This study redresses this shortcoming by presenting findings on various recreational sports, at a micro-level within the context of county Tipperary. Secondly, in 1840, the Ordnance Survey printed a series of maps on a scale of six inches to one mile for all of Ireland. Cartography is used to identify and map sporting sites. This valuable primary source greatly influenced the starting date for this study. Thirdly, the advent and growth of the popular printing press was spreading countrywide and from the context of Tipperary, there were by 1840, two bi-weekly newspapers printed in the county, each representing a different political standpoint. These were the nationalist *Tipperary Free Press*, established in 1826, and printed in Clonmel in the south the county and the *Nenagh*

[2] J.G.A. Prim 'Olden popular pastimes in Kilkenny' in *Transactions of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society* Vol. II 1852-53 (Dublin, 1855), pp 319-335. James Kelly. 'The pastime of the elite: clubs and societies and the promotion of horse racing' in James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell (eds) *Clubs and societies in eighteenth century Ireland* (Dublin, 2010), pp 409-24.
[3] James Kelly. *Sport in Ireland 1600-1840* (Dublin, 2014).
[4] Kelly. *Sport in Ireland*, p. 20-1. For horse racing see: Col. S.J. Watson. *Between the Flags: a history of Irish steeplechasing* (Dublin, 1969); G. St. J. Williams and F.P. Hyland, The *Irish Derby, 1866-1979* (London, 1980); John Welcome. *Irish horse-racing, an illustrated history* (London, 1982); Fergus A. D'Arcy. *Horses, lords and racing men: the Turf Club, 1790-1990* (The Curragh, 1991) John O'Flaherty. *Listowel races, 1858-1991* (Listowel, 1992); Stan McCormack. *Against the odds, Kilbeggan races, 1840-1994* (Np. 1994); G. St. J. Williams and F.P. Hyland. *Jameson Irish Grand National, a history of Ireland's premier steeplechase* (Dublin, 1995). For cricket see: Patrick Hone. *Cricket in Ireland* (Tralee, 1955); Patrick Bracken. *Foreign and fantastic field sports: cricket in Co. Tipperary* (Thurles, 2004).

Guardian, established in 1838, printed in the north of the county, in the town of that name. The founding proprietor of the *Nenagh Guardian*, John Kempston, set the stall out for his paper as one which was 'strongly Conservative'.[5] Similar to the *Tipperary Free Press*, its content featured meetings of the various Poor Law Unions, meetings of the various government bodies, and accounts of 'army news'. The content of the Nenagh newspaper did not endear it to the Catholic majority, in the way that the *Tipperary Free Press* did. Both were similar with respect to the level of space devoted to what was termed 'sporting intelligence'.

To complement the growth in the range of local newspapers was the development of the educational system in Ireland. The development of a national school system in Ireland set in motion a structure which, for the first time, gave all children an opportunity to learn how to read and write.[6] Education, even if attendance was erratic, gave people the ability to read the local newspaper or letters home from relations who had emigrated.[7] It also began a process whereby a popular culture characterised by belief in fairies and dedication to holy wells was replaced by a culture which was 'literate, anglicised and politically aware'.[8]

The terminal date of 1880 was specifically chosen as it coincided with the onset of widespread land agitation. This led to civil unrest which impinged on all aspects of social life, including recreational sport. This era came to be known as the Land War and one of the main sporting casualties was fox hunting, though as this thesis demonstrates, the period immediately prior to this land agitation was one of the most prolific for hunting to hounds in

[5] Joseph C. Hayes, 'Guide to Tipperary newspapers 1770-1989' in *Tipperary Historical Journal 1989*, p. 8.
[6] M.E. Daly. 'The development of the national school system, 1831-40' in Art Cosgrove and Donal McCartney (eds). *Studies in Irish history presented to R. Dudley Edwards* (Naas, 1979), pp 150-63.
[7] Mary E. Daly. *Social and economic history of Ireland since 1800* (Dublin, 1981), pp 117-18.
[8] J.S. Donnelly and Kerby A. Miller. *Irish popular culture 1650-1850* (Dublin and Portland, 1999), p. 24.

the county's history.[9] The principal advocate for reform in land matters was Michael Davitt, as he sought low rent, free sale, and fixity of tenure for tenant farmers.[10] The terminal date is also four years prior to the foundation of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA). The period leading up to the foundation of the GAA and the organisation itself have received much attention from both a national and local perspective.[11] Consequently, the evolution of sport in Tipperary, and indeed for much of Ireland, in the preceding forty years has not been assessed at a micro level except for the study of Co. Westmeath by Hunt, which had a start date of 1850.[12] This thesis investigates the factors behind the growth and development of sport in this period and clearly demonstrates that it was commercially driven from the outset, as local landowners and businessmen were receptive to the appeal of sport and the business and money which they could accrue from it. Business acumen was not the sole preserve of the business elite. The thesis also illustrates that people were willing to travel long distances to sell wine, beer and spirits at sporting events. In a local context, a whole range of trades and industries sprang up around the country house estate as farriers, caterers and game keepers serviced the needs of those in authority.

[9] For the land war see; *Tenant right in Tipperary: humorous sketches of Irish life and character* (Glasgow, 1886); B.L. Solow. *The land question and the Irish economy, 1870-1903* (Harvard, 1971); W.E. Vaughan. *Landlords and tenants in mid-Victorian Ireland* (Oxford, 1994); William J. Hayes.'Church, land and politics at the end of the 19th century' in W.J. Hayes (ed.) *Moyne-Templetuohy: a life of its own. The story of a Tipperary parish*. Vol II (Moyne-Templetuohy, 2001), pp 182-337. L.P. Curtis Jr. 'Stopping the hunt 1881-1882: an aspect of the Irish land war' in C.H.E. Philpin (ed.) *Nationalism and popular protest in Ireland* (Cambridge, 2002), pp 349-402.

[10] M.M. O'Hara. *Chief and tribune Parnell and Davitt* (Dublin and London, 1919), p.64.

[11] Thomas F. O'Sullivan. *The story of the GAA* (Dublin, 1916); Canon Philip Fogarty. *Tipperary's GAA story* (Thurles, 1960); Art Ó Maolfabhail. *Camán: 2,000 years of hurling in Ireland* (Dundalk, 1973); Marcus de Burca. *The GAA: a history of the Gaelic Athletic Association* (Dublin, 1980); Pádraig Puirséal *The GAA in its time* (Dublin, 1982); W.F. Mandle *The Gaelic athletic association and Irish nationalist politics 1884-1924* (Dublin and London, 1987); Dónal McAnallen, David Hassan and Roddy Hegarty. *The evolution of the GAA: Ulaidh, Éire agus eile* (Ulster Historical Foundation, 2009).

[12] Tom Hunt. *Sport and society in Victorian Ireland: the case of Westmeath.* (Cork, 2007).

Geographic and Socio-economic Setting of Tipperary

Tipperary, is the sixth largest of the thirty-two counties which comprise the island of Ireland, and is situated in the province of Munster (Figure 1).[13] It is 430,519 hectares in extent. Similar to other regions and communities, the population of Tipperary declined for many decades in the aftermath of the Great Famine, principally due to emigration.[14] By 1855 'as many as two and a half million people had departed Ireland'.[15] As Table 1 demonstrates, the population declined for each decade after the census, a decline which continued until 1961, by which date the population of the county was 53,696. This was 73.3 percent less than that which was recorded in 1841. Up to 1901, the net emigration rate from Ireland was in double figures, with 'the outflow about four million between 1850 and 1914'.[16]

Table 1: Population change in county Tipperary, 1841-1881.

Census period	Total population	Male	Female	Decrease	Percentage decrease
1841	201,161	100,558	100,603	----	----
1851	147,164	71,049	76,115	53,997	26.84
1861	109,220	53,967	55,253	37,944	25.78
1871	93,617	46,405	47,212	15,603	14.29
1881	86,331	42,773	43,558	7,286	7.78

[13] See page 8.
[14] T.E. Nyhan. 'An examination of the socio-economic structure of pre-famine society in Thurles poor law union.' Unpublished B.A. thesis, National University of Ireland, 1978.; N. Beary Ó Cleirigh. 'Glimpses of south Tipperary on the eve of the great famine' in *Tipperary Historical Journal 1993*, pp 76-81;C. O'Mahony 'Emigration from Thurles workhouse 1848-58' in *Tipperary Historical Journal 1993*, pp 82-87; C. O'Mahony 'Emigration from Thurles workhouse 1848-58' in *Tipperary Historical Journal 1994*, pp 105-09; Denis G. Marnane. 'South Tipperary on the eve of the great famine' in *Tipperary Historical Journal 1995*, pp 1-53; Heather Carew. 'Cashel workhouse in famine times: a study from 1845-1855'. Unpublished M.Phil thesis, National University of Ireland, 1995; Denis G. Marnane. 'The famine in south Tipperary part one' in *Tipperary Historical Journal 1996*, pp 1-42; Denis G. Marnane. 'The famine in south Tipperary part two' in *Tipperary Historical Journal 1997*, pp 131-50; Daniel Grace. 'Priests who died in the great famine' in *Tipperary Historical Journal 1997*, pp 178-79;Denis G. Marnane. 'The famine in south Tipperary part three' in *Tipperary Historical Journal 1998*, pp 56-75; Denis G. Marnane. 'The famine in south Tipperary part four' in *Tipperary Historical Journal 1999*, pp 1-24; H. Kennally. 'North Tipperary famine orphans 'exported' to Yorkshire' in *Tipperary Historical Journal 1999*, pp 25-37; Denis G. Marnane. 'The famine in south Tipperary part five' in *Tipperary Historical Journal 2000*, pp 73-119. Daniel Grace. *The great famine in Nenagh poor law union Co. Tipperary* (Nenagh, 2000).
[15] John Crowley, William J. Smyth and Mike Murphy (eds) *Atlas of the great Irish famine* (Cork, 2012), p. 12.
[16] Cormac Ó Gráda. *Ireland: a new economic history 1780-1939* (Oxford, 1994), pp 224-25.

Cormac Ó Gráda has observed that there was a 'common perception of nineteenth century Ireland' as relying heavily on agriculture.[17] The evidence from the 1821 census, suggests otherwise with 'two-fifths [of the population] declaring an occupation ... chiefly employed in trades, manufactures or handicraft'.[18] Tipperary was a rural-based economy with strong ties to the land and agriculture. In 1859, 'flour milling was in the zenith of prosperity…in every part of the county. The tillage lands were used largely for wheat-growing, and many fortunes were made by mill-owners'.[19] Cahir, in 1866, was described as 'a thriving town…a great place for flour mills, an immense lot of wheat being sent annually to Waterford.'[20] However, once the Corn Laws were repealed, Irish milling declined. A fall in the export of corn through Waterford port was an indicator of the decline in Clonmel and the south-east.[21] Throughout much of Ireland, there was a general move away from corn towards livestock. Corn growing and milling continued in some regions of Tipperary, with 'nearly all the extensive farmers' around Thurles dividing their 'attention between the raising of young stock, dairying, sheep fattening and tillage'.[22]

Tipperary was typical of most other counties of Ireland in terms of urban growth and population density. Its strength lay in its pastoral agricultural base. To complement this, were the market towns dotted around the county. In Ireland, in 1841, the greatest concentrations of population were 'across south Ulster and into north Connaught'.[23] West Clare, the peninsular areas of southwest Munster and some of the lowlands of mid-Munster also had strong

[17] Ó Gráda. *A new economic history*, p. 273.
[18] Ó Gráda. *A new economic history*, p. 273.
[19] George Henry Bassett, County *Tipperary one hundred years ago: a guide and directory 1889*. (reprint Belfast, 1991), p. 23.
[20] John Murray, *Handbook for travellers in Ireland*. (2nd revised ed. London, 1866), p. 273.
[21] Sean O'Donnell, *Clonmel 1840-1900: anatomy of an Irish town*. (Dublin, n.d.), p. 23.
[22] Bassett. *Tipperary: a guide and directory 1889*, p. 369.
[23] Crowley, Smyth and Murphy (eds). *Atlas of the great Irish famine*, p. 7.

densities, around 154 people per square kilometre. There were also high concentrations of people around the large urban centres of Belfast, Dublin and Cork.

Figure 1: Location of County Tipperary

The topography of Tipperary is such, that the third longest river in Ireland, the Suir, bisects the county north-south, flowing 183 kilometres to the sea at Waterford city. On its western border is the River Shannon, which flows into Lough Derg, before entering the Atlantic Ocean in Limerick. The Galtee Mountains to the south west of the county, are the primary mountain range in Tipperary, with Galteemore peaking at 917 metres, making it the sixth highest mountain in the country. There are some other hill ranges such as the Slieveardagh Hills, encompassing the Killenaule and Ballingarry districts to the east, and the Slievefelim

and the Silvermines Mountains which extend from Upperchurch to Kilcommon and Rearcross to the west. Both the Shanbally estate, near Clogheen, and the Glengall estate at Cahir, encompassed much of the Galtee Mountains. Game preservation notices for the estate lands featured regularly in the local press.[24] While the effects of the Famine ensured great hardship for many people, within the county there were thousands of people who emigrated in the wake of the distress.[25] Of those who emigrated from 1 May 1851 to 31 March 1881, 154,802 gave Tipperary as their county of origin.[26] Yet, in spite of the failure of the potato crop, death and emigration, much general agricultural activity continued within the county.

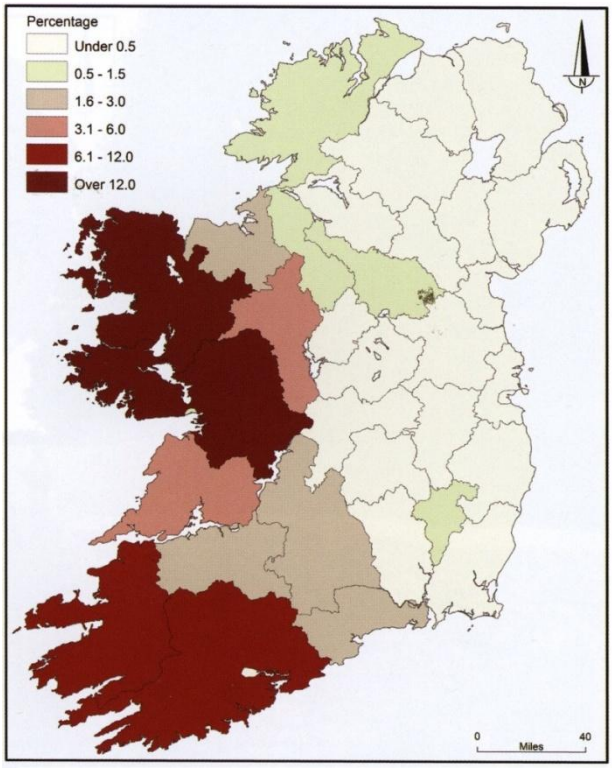

Figure 2: Starvation deaths in Ireland, 1845-1851 (Source Crowley, Smyth & Murphy)[27]

[24] *Tipperary Free Press*, 22 Apr. 1856; 19 Mar. 1858; 15 Feb. 1859.
[25] A key text to the famine is Crowley, Smyth and Murphy (eds) *Atlas of the great Irish famine*.There are 28 articles in each volume of the *Tipperary Historical Journal*, from 1995 to 2000, which account the effects of the Great Famine in Tipperary. For a specific workhouse assessment see Anne Lanigan, 'The workhouse child in Thurles 1840-1880' in William Corbett and William Nolan, (eds) *Thurles: the cathedral town*. (Dublin, 1989), pp 55-80.
[26] W.E. Vaughan and A.J. Fitzpatrick, *Irish historical statistics: population 1821-1971*. (Dublin, 1978), pp 306-7.
[27] Crowley, Smyth and Murphy (eds). *Atlas of the great Irish famine*, p. 115.

While there was untold distress caused by the famine, Tipperary did not fare as badly as counties in the south-west and west of Ireland. As may be seen in Figure 2, Galway and Mayo, in the west, and Cork and Kerry, in the southwest, were the four counties which endured higher mortality rates because of starvation. Between 1846 and 1851, when compared to the rest of the country, Tipperary came in twelfth highest in relation to average annual excess death rates, per 1,000.[28] Mayo at seventy-two, and Sligo at just over sixty-one, were the counties with the highest mortality rates per 1,000 of population. The mortality rate for Tipperary was thirty-five per 1,000 persons.

Market towns were spread throughout the county. In 1841, there were six significant market towns Roscrea, Nenagh, Thurles, Cashel, Tipperary and Carrick-on-Suir. This made Tipperary equal to Co. Cork with towns of this status.[29] Twenty years later all the main towns in the county had a population threshold above 2,000 persons. For comparative purposes, a mid-range date of 1861 is chosen to indicate population levels in the post-Famine era. Clonmel had the highest population figure, 11,646; Carrick-on-Suir, 6,536; Nenagh, 6,204; and Tipperary town, 5,864 persons.[30] All the other towns had population levels below 5,000. When compared to the larger urban areas of Ireland, the population rate of the Tipperary towns was typically in the same cohort level. It was only the larger city areas of Dublin, 246,465; Belfast, 119,393; Cork, 79,594; Limerick, 43,924; Galway, 16,448 and Kilkenny, 13,235; where there were increased population densities.[31] Of the towns in Tipperary, Cahir, Carrick-on-Suir, Clonmel, Fethard, Nenagh, Roscrea, Templemore, and Tipperary, had military barracks.

[28] Joel Mokyr. *Why Ireland starved: a quantitative and analytical history of the Irish economy, 1800-1850* (London, 1983), p. 267.
[29] Crowley, Smyth and Murphy (eds). *Atlas of the great Irish famine,* p. 240.
[30] Vaughan and Fitzpatrick. *Population, 1821-1971*, p. 34.
[31] Vaughan and Fitzpatrick. *Population, 1821-1971*, pp 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 40.

In 1830, there were 40,979 Irish non-commissioned officers and other ranks in the British army, representing 42.2 per cent of the army as a whole. [32] Though the actual numbers of men enlisting in 1868 (55,583) and 1873 (42,284) were above the 1830 figures. From 1840, the overall percentage of Irishmen enlisting in the army continued to decline, down to 26,376 men in 1898 or 12.9 percent. Of ninety-five military barracks in Ireland, in 1837, eleven of them were located in Tipperary (Figure 3). This was the second highest concentration in the country after Cork, which had thirteen barracks.[33] Seven of those in Cork had accommodation for 500 men or more, compared to just three such barracks in Tipperary.

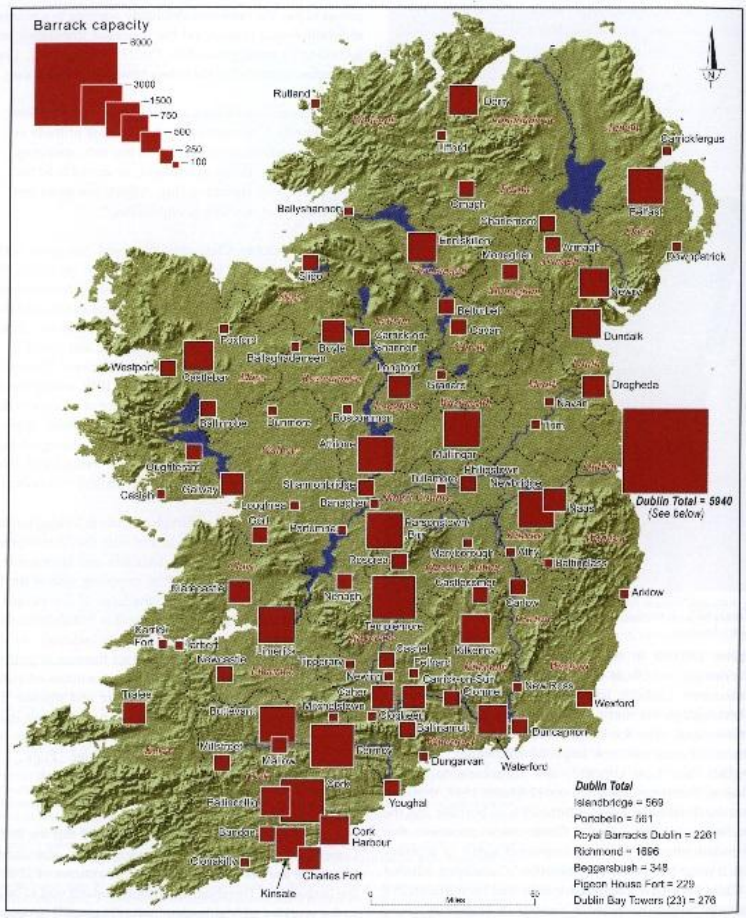

Figure 3: Distribution of army barracks in Ireland, 1837. (Source: Crowley, Smyth & Murphy)[34]

[32] E.M. Spiers 'Army organisation and society in the nineteenth century' in Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffrey (eds) *A military history of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 337.
[33] Crowley, Smyth and Murphy, *Atlas of the great Irish famine* p. 54.
[34] Crowley, Smyth and Murphy. *Atlas of the great Irish famine* p. 54.

At Templemore, Richmond barracks was opened in 1812 'with accommodations for 54 officers, 1,500 men, and 30 horses, and a hospital attached for 80 patients.'[35] Apart from serving a military function, this barracks played a huge role in the promotion of sport, not only in the town itself where it was located, but throughout much of mid and north Tipperary. Similarly in Clonmel, Cahir and Tipperary, the military had a significant presence. Clonmel had a mix of infantry and cavalry and consequently the barracks brought to the local town and hinterland many officers and enlisted men from a variety of backgrounds, both in Ireland and Britain. The presence of the military brought an economic benefit to a town. Many of the army personnel were active participants in various sporting recreations.

Resident Magistrates and Justices of the Peace were scattered throughout the county, with some of these holding large estates. The High Sherriff, Sir John C. Carden, Templemore Abbey had an estate of over 6,680 acres, while the sub-sheriff, Samuel M. Going, had an estate of over 2,522 acres.[36] While there was a social status associated with owning an estate, there were also benefits to be had, if one was a member of parliament, a member of the grand jury, or a poor law guardian.[37] Taking a mid-range date of 1860, there were ninety-two county families recorded for Co. Tipperary.[38] Cork, the biggest county in the country had 164 families, while Dublin had 111 families listed.[39] Other counties had smaller numbers of such families - Limerick had seventy-one; Antrim had sixty-five; Kilkenny had fifty-two and Kildare had forty-one. This gave Tipperary a range of county families at the higher end of the scale.[40] Forty-nine families had a demesne attached to the main residence, ranging from

[35] Samuel Lewis, *A topographical dictionary of Ireland*. Vol. II (London, 1837), pp 609-10.
[36] *Return of owners of land of one acre and upwards, in the several counties, counties of cities, and counties of towns in Ireland* (Dublin, 1876), pp 159, 162.
[37] Mike Huggins, 'Sport and the upper classes: introduction' in *Sport in History*, Vol. 28, No. 3. (Sept. 2008), p. 356.
[38] Edward Walford. *The county families of the United Kingdom* (London, 1860), pp 840-41.
[39] Walford. *The county families*, pp 814-15.
[40] Walford. *The county families*, pp 809, 826, 829.

eighty acres, at Woodville, near Templemore, up to the 2,500 acre demesne held by Viscount Hawarden at Dundrum. The extent of his estate was 15,272 acres, making him the third largest land owner in the county, behind Viscount Lismore (34,945 acres) and the Marquis of Ormonde, whose Tipperary estates totalled 15,765 acres.[41] These three gentlemen were also peers in the House of Lords.[42] In 1878, in a return of landowners, there were a total of 389 men who held estates valued at £100 and over in Tipperary.[43] Of these, 122 estates were valued at between £100 and £500, while 141 were valued at between £500 and £1,000, with 109 valued at between £1,000 and £5,000.[44] The remaining seventeen estates were valued at £5,000 or over.[45]

Tom Hunt has observed for Co. Westmeath, that an important element in the context of the economy in Westmeath, was that 'it created a number of wealthy individual farmers and estate proprietors who invested some of their finance in their recreational activities and also provided the patronage to support the recreational activities of others'.[46] A similar framework is also evidenced in Tipperary, where the presence of such estates and the patronage of their owners are critical to the emergence of sport in the county.

Infrastructural Developments

The single most important infrastructural development in the county during the time frame of this thesis was the development of the rail network. The railway was a critical feature in the

[41] *Return of owners of land*, pp 163, 165, 167.
[42] *Debrett's illustrated peerage and baronetage of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland 1864* (London, 1864), pp 108, 129, 156.
[43] U.H. Hussey de Burgh, *The landowners of Ireland* (Dublin, 1878), pp 158-172.
[44] T. Jones Hughes, 'Landholding and settlement in County Tipperary in the nineteenth century' in William Nolan (ed.), *Tipperary history and society* (Dublin, 1985), p. 340.
[45] £100 in 1880 equates to £8,429 in 2012, while £5,000 in 1880 equates to £421,400 in 2012. Calculations carried out on Measuring Worth.com website. Online http://www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/ (Accessed 6 April 2014).
[46] Tom Hunt, 'The Development of Sport in County Westmeath, 1850-1905,' unpublished PhD thesis, De Montfort University, Leicester, 2005, pp 5-6.

growth of recreational sport in the county. It permitted the easy movement of people, animals and goods. It also assisted in the diffusion of sport, especially horseracing. The railway had great economic, social and sporting benefits for Tipperary business people and residents. The Tory Prime Minister, Robert Peel, who commenced his political career as a Member of Parliament for Cashel, in 1812, after his father purchased this seat for him, kept a watchful eye on the various rail networks proposed for Ireland.[47] It has been suggested that Peel sought to open up the countryside outside of Dublin to 'make Tipperary amenable to work and policing.'[48] Work on rail lines commenced. Progress was rapid and at a time of Famine, the construction of the railways gave huge employment to local communities. In May 1847, work on the line to Thurles was well advanced with 'a large number of men' employed.[49] On 13 March 1848, the Great Southern and Western Railway (GS&WR) opened the connecting rail line between Ballybrophy and Thurles.[50] This effectively connected the county with Dublin. Under the initial 1844 Act, the desired terminal for the first section of the rail link was Cashel but 'the promoters had not yet decided whether the railway should run east or west of the Galtee Hills. In the following year the company obtained a second Act which prescribed the western route'.[51] Consequently the line stopped at Thurles. It was later extended to Limerick Junction and then to Cork. The new line opened on 29 October 1849. Dublin, Cork, and Limerick were now connected by a rail link.

Further rail connections from Ballybrophy to Roscrea, opened on 19 October 1857; Roscrea to Nenagh, opened on 5 October 1863; and Nenagh to Birdhill, opened on 1 June 1864, brought the railway to the north of Tipperary. When the rail connection between two other

[47] Kevin O'Connor. *Ironing the land: the coming of the railways to Ireland*. (Dublin, 1999), p. 48.
[48] O'Connor. *Ironing the land*, p. 49.
[49] *Tipperary Free Press*, 12 May 1847.
[50] K.A. Murray and D.B. McNeill. *The great southern & western railway* (Dublin, 1976), p. 186.
[51] Murray and McNeill. *Great southern & western railway*, p. 15.

cites, Limerick on the western seaboard and Waterford on the south coast was completed, its route had traversed much of south Tipperary. The connecting link between Tipperary town and Clonmel, opened on 30 April 1852 as part of the Waterford and Limerick Railway, gave the south of the county a connection to not only these two cities but also Dublin and Cork where it met the GS&WR at Limerick Junction.[52] Tipperary was to benefit from the introduction of the rail network into Ireland. Because of the central position of the county, the connecter routes serving four of the seven principal cities in the country, Dublin to Cork, Dublin to Limerick and Limerick to Waterford, passed through it. By 1870, south of a line drawn from Dublin to Galway the rail network was reasonably extensive but north of this line it was virtually non-existent.

Over the course of sixteen years, from 1848 to 1864, the introduction of the railway into Tipperary effectively saw all of the main towns in the county serviced by a rail connection. The landlords, whose land it cut through, were handsomely rewarded. In November 1846, Sir Henry Carden was paid £4,650 by the GS&WR for lands it procured as it traversed his Templemore estate.[53] A branch line from Clonmel to Thurles, opened in two stages, on 23 June 1879 and 1 July 1880, connected the east of the county with the GS&WR and also the Waterford and Limerick Railway.[54] A proposed connection between Templemore and Nenagh, much vaunted in the local press, never came to fruition.[55] Like Co. Westmeath and the other regions of Ireland which had a rail network its introduction was 'the most important infrastructural improvement to take place within the county'.[56] But, as has been shown in previous studies, the rail network greatly facilitated the transportation of not only people but

[52] Murray and McNeill, *Great southern & western railway*, p. 110.
[53] *Tipperary Free Press*, 2 Dec. 1846.
[54] Murray and McNeill. *Great southern & western railway*, pp 186-188.
[55] *Nenagh Guardian*, 20 Oct. 1860, p. 2.
[56] Hunt, *Sport and society*, p. 8.

also animals and specifically horses. The railway was to prove of great benefit to the horse racing fraternity in Tipperary.[57] In September 1850, the tender of seven purpose built horse boxes to be supplied to the Great Southern and Western Railway by Joseph Wright, at a rate of £78 10s each, was accepted by the company, emphasising its requirement to transport animals for whatever purpose, inclusive of horse racing.[58]

The rail network also permitted the transportation of adolescent boys and girls to boarding schools around the country. While there was nothing unusual in this, the Tipperary Grammar School did make note of the fact that the school stood within 'five minutes walk of the railway station, and is completely secluded from the town'.[59] Some eleven years later, the walking distance had miraculously come down to two minutes.[60] The education sector was an important through which children were introduced to recreational sport. St. John's College, Newport, boasted that the house was most favourably situated, 'remote from the temptations of a large town' and that it has twenty acres play-ground are attached to the premises.[61] While the development of the education sector was an integral feature of the early Victorian years, with new national schools erected all over Tipperary, it was mainly the second level schools which participated in regular sporting activity.[62]

But the railways were also a means by which children were transported away from Tipperary to educational institutions elsewhere. Typically, this meant public school education, either

[57] D'Arcy, *Horses, lords and racing men*, p. 145. For a further insight into the railways and horse racing see John Tolson and Wray Vamplew, 'Derailed: Railways and horse-racing revisited' in *The Sports Historian*, No. 18, 2 (November 1998), pp 34-49. John Tolson and Wray Vamplew, 'Facilitation not revolution: railways and British flat racing 1830-1914' in *Sport in History*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (Summer 2003), pp 89-106.
[58] Coras Iompair Éireann archives, Dublin. Meeting of the Great Southern and Western Railway Board, 27 September 1850. Great Southern and Western Railway minute book No. 5, pp 234-35.
[59] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 5 July 1862.
[60] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 15 Jan. 1873.
[61] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 29 July 1863.
[62] New national schools include Littleton (1847), Moycarkey (1847), Dromakeenan (1851), Clonlisk (1857)

elsewhere in Ireland or in Great Britain. Some of the sons of successful Tipperary landowners and businessmen attended public school, such as Harrow; Stoneyhurst; and Winchester in England. For others St. John's College, Waterford; Blackrock College, Dublin; or Clongowes Wood College, Co. Kildare, were likely destinations. The attendance of boys at public schools in Great Britain and the degree to which they were either knowledgeable of, or active participants in, public school games, is also explored and balanced against previous writings on this subject.[63]

Irish Sports Historiography

Up until 2005, when Tom Hunt completed his PhD dissertation on sport and society in Co. Westmeath, the academic study of sport in Ireland, when compared with similar models in Great Britain, was virtually non-existent.[64] Books and papers submitted to Irish academic journals, which had a sports interest, quite often carried a political or nationalist narrative.[65] Yet, while of great benefit to the study of sport in Ireland, in such contexts they did little to elucidate the early origins of sport or indeed to highlight the socio-economic characteristics of the people involved in these recreations. Since Hunt's pioneering work, subsequent academic research has used the county and provincial administrative models as units from which to investigate sporting developments in several parts of Ireland.[66] The principal

[63] G.P.T. Finn, 'Trinity mysteries: university, elite schooling and sport in Ireland' in *The International Journal of the History of Sport* Vol. 27, No. 13 (Sept. 2010), p. 2274.
Mike Cronin, ''Trinity mysteries': responding to a chaotic reading of Irish history' in *The International Journal of the History of Sport.* Vol. 28, No. 18, December 2011, p. 2757.
[64] Hunt, 'The development of sport in County Westmeath'.
[65] For example see Mandle, *The Gaelic Athletic Association*; Richard Davis, 'Irish cricket and Nationalism' in *Sporting Traditions: Journal of the Australian Society for Sports History*. Vol. 10, No. 2, 1994, pp 77-96.
[66] Liam O'Callaghan, *Rugby in Munster: A Social and Cultural History* (Cork, 2011); Dónal McAnallen, 'Playing on the Fourth Green State: The Gaelic Athletic Association and the Northern Ireland State, 1921-1968,' unpublished PhD thesis, National University of Ireland, Galway, 2010; Richard McElligott, 'Forging a Kingdom: the Establishment and Development of the Gaelic Athletic Association in Kerry, 1884-1924,' unpublished PhD thesis, University College Dublin, 2011; Conor Curran, 'Why Donegal Slept: the Development of Gaelic Games in Donegal, 1884-1934,' unpublished PhD thesis, De Montfort University, Leicester, 2012; David Toms. 'A Social History of Sport in Munster: Cork, Tipperary and Waterford, c.1880-1930,' unpublished PhD thesis, National University of Ireland, Cork, 2014.

research interests of these works focused on the GAA, shortly after its foundation, with only Liam O'Callaghan's study of rugby in Munster and David Toms' study of rugby and association football in Cork, Tipperary and Waterford having a non-GAA research focus. These studies, using county or provincial boundaries, complement similar studies in Britain.[67] This study adds to the social and topographic knowledge of Tipperary.

The sports model as it developed in Tipperary was quite similar in structure to that which occurred in Ingersoll and Woodstock in Ontario, Canada. Bouchier showed that 'the officer elite and their families and friends brought the values of genteel English country life to Woodstock…and used privately owned facilities and lands to ensure social segregation'.[68] This, to an extent, was replicated in Tipperary as sport principally took place behind the estate walls or military perimeter. However, the evidence from the local Tipperary press suggests that cricket was much more a game of the people, especially in the 1870s, as it crossed the divide from one which had an estate or military focus, to one which took the name of the townland from where most of the players originated.[69]

Another aspect of the evolution of sport in Tipperary was the absence of the publican in its promotion. Whereas in England, Scotland and Canada, the tavern and inn keeper played a pivotal role in the promotion of recreational sport, recreations, especially those which appealed greatly to the lower classes, such as cock fighting and pugilism. No evidence has come to light in the press or petty sessions court records, to indicate that this was a factor in

[67] Of specific note here are the history and society series of county studies, edited by William Nolan, which are a collection of interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county. Tipperary, Offaly, Laois, Kilkenny, Limerick Wicklow, Wexford, Waterford have so far been published.
[68] Nancy B. Bouchier. *For the love of the game: amateur sport in small-town Ontario, 1838-1895* (Montreal, 2003), p. 15.
[69] A townland is one of the smallest of the administrative and land divisions in Ireland.

Tipperary.[70] In South Northumberland 'between 1858 and 1889 all fifteen commercial sporting grounds were operated by innkeepers'.[71] In relation to patronage given by military officers and the landed elite, that which occurred in Tipperary was similar to that in Canada and in some parts of Scotland, where Tranter has noted that 'the assistance provided by private patrons was vital'.[72] Without the support of such patrons, the opportunity for sport to evolve and develop would, like that in Scotland, have been greatly impeded. But what was missing in the Tipperary context was the plebeian interaction with sport. Innkeepers and publicans interacted with their clientele and local communities in the promotion of sport in Great Britain and Canada, where they were an important element in the development of sport. This interaction did not happen in Tipperary. Evidence from the press supports this finding. A similar finding has been made by Tom Hayes in his study of sport in Victorian Limerick, where he found that 'the pub in Limerick did not perform the same sporting function as its English counterpart'.[73]

Source Material

The contemporary Tipperary press was one of the main primary sources utilised in the research for this study. As the nineteenth century, progressed so too did literacy levels.[74] In tandem with this came a rise in the number of newspapers which were printed in Tipperary, though some papers were short lived.[75] The county was well served with newspapers which were published in the main urban centres. As previously noted, two important newspapers

[70] For England see: Alan Metcalfe. 'Organised sport in the mining communities of south Northumberland, 1800-1889' in *Victorian Studies*. Vol. 25 No. 4 (Summer, 1982), pp 484-85. For Scotland see: Neil L. Tranter. 'The patronage of organised sport in central Scotland, 1820-1900' in *Journal of Sport History*, Vol. 16, No. 3. (Winter, 1989), p. 235. For Canada see Bouchier. *For the love of the game*, p. 13.
[71] Metcalfe. 'Organised sport in the mining communities,' p. 484.
[72] Tranter. 'The patronage of organised sport,' p. 228.
[73] Thomas Hayes. 'From ludicrous to logical: the transformation of sport in north Munster, 1850-90.' Unpublished PhD thesis, Mary Immaculate College/University of Limerick, 2009.
[74] Joseph Lee, *The modernisation of Irish society 1848-1918*. (reprint Dublin, 1989), p. 13.
[75] Hayes, 'Tipperary newspapers,' p. 3. The *Cashel Conciliator*, published in 1843, had only a three issue run.

researched were the *Nenagh Guardian* and the *Tipperary Free Press*. Other newspapers consulted were the *Clonmel Chronicle* (established in 1848), a paper with a similar political outlook to the *Nenagh Guardian*. Printed and published by Edmund Woods, 'it became the official organ of the Conservative Party'.[76] The *Clonmel Chronicle* differed from the other two papers, in that it covered news which had a wide geographical remit including much of north Tipperary, south Kilkenny and Waterford. At the outset, the three papers filled much of the initial space not taken over by advertising, with, among other topics, reports and accounts of race meetings from Ireland and Great Britain. Races at the Curragh[77] and Lucan[78] in Ireland, and Newmarket[79] and Ascot[80] in England accounted for much of the racing reports in the 1840s.

As reports of race meetings in Tipperary started to appear with more regularity in the local press, the coverage of race meetings outside of the county declined. Three other newspapers of note were the *Tipperary Vindicator*, established in Nenagh in 1844, the *Tipperary Advocate*, also printed in Nenagh from 1857, and the *Cashel Gazette*, established in that town, in 1864. The value of the newspapers to the research is to make sure that the study is broad and extensive. While the papers themselves were not initially sport specific, there was a discernible move towards the reporting of sporting activity from the mid-1860s. This led to an upsurge in the rate of sports-related items which were recorded. The press also assisted in the promotion of new sports and games – lawn tennis, rugby and association football, which became apparent in the latter half of the 1870s. A similar trend was apparent with the

[76] Hayes, 'Tipperary newspapers,' p. 6.
[77] *Tipperary Free Press*, 24 Apr. 1847; 4 July 1849.
[78] *Tipperary Free Press*, 8 May 1847.
[79] *Nenagh Guardian*, 17 Apr. 1844; *Tipperary Free Press*, 14 Apr. 1847.
[80] *Nenagh Guardian*, 12 June 1844; *Tipperary Free Press*, 5 June 1847.

reporting of sporting events in Limerick.[81] National titles were also used to gain insight to sporting trends, for comparative purposes.

Petty Sessions records of the local courts throughout Tipperary were widely consulted in the National Archives, Dublin. This is a source which has been neglected by sports historians. It is a valuable reference point to identify issues which saw many men and boys appear before the local magistrates, for engaging in some form of sporting recreation, which resulted in issues concerning trespass; obstruction of the public highway; or breaches of the Sabbath. It is probable that a lack of analysis of these records occurred for a number of reasons. Firstly, there is the time issue involved in perusing microfilm reels to ascertain if there are any sports-related incidents recorded. As the newspapers regularly carried accounts of Petty Sessions cases, one could infer from the press report that nothing took place. However, only a small number of incidents found their way into the papers and many other misdemeanours were not recorded. In the press summary of a particular petty sessions sitting, the report in the press typically ended by stating that matters of little public interest concluded the proceedings. But it is here that sporting evidence is missed. Secondly, some sport researchers may dismiss these records in the mistaken belief, that if there was anything of value in the Petty Sessions records, that it would be in the public domain by now. This is not the case. These records are of great relevance in identifying sporting misdemeanours at a micro-level. The research demonstrated that public order offences for ball playing on the street, or on the Sabbath, were two areas, especially in the 1850s, which the constabulary and judiciary frowned upon and accounts of these appeared in the court record.

[81] Hayes. 'From ludicrous to logical,' p. 66.

In the course of this research, no incident involving a female participant has been identified, though this is not taken as proof that such did not occur. Ball playing on the public streets, breach of the Sabbath laws, and assault while taking part in sporting recreation, were some of the issues which resulted in the appearance of men and boys before the magistrates.

One of the primary concerns pertaining to the source material was that sport-related documentation, such as committee books, minute books, account books and general club records are virtually non-existent. Extant minute books, score books and account books have not been identified, even if ever such existed, in order that the newspaper research is underpinned with contemporary club documentation.[82] The lack of such data has been compensated by the regular recording of meetings in the local press, especially during the last decade of the research. This permits a greater understanding of the issues and nuances which impacted on clubs and personnel. This in no way compensates for the previous decades and the degree to which there was an under-reporting of events in the press. Though sports related activity took place pre-Famine, the nature of the reporting suggests that it is likely that much sporting activity went unrecorded. Hunt suggests that even with cricket, a sport which received extensive coverage in the local press, 'under-recording is easily established but any attempt to establish its extent is fraught with difficulties'.[83] A similar parallel is made with the research undertaken for this thesis.

Methodology

Sport related data identified in all sources was quantified and entered on a database. This permitted the construction of various graphs and trend lines, which greatly assisted in the

[82] A minute book for the Clonmel rowing club from the 1870s is known to be in existence, but despite two requests to the club captain, and another to an eminent local historian in Clonmel, permission to view the minute book has not been forthcoming.
[83] Hunt, 'The development of sport in County Westmeath,' p. 12.

underpinning of arguments used about various sports. Where a sport is identified prior to the Famine period, chronological graphs are used to demonstrate growth or decline. The reason for this is that such mapping allows for cross analysis to ascertain if the popularity of a specific sport impacted on that of another, and if so, the degree to which this impact manifested itself. Mapping is also employed throughout the thesis. Maps are a central aspect as they demonstrate patterns of play, with cluster developments reflective of the popularity of a specific sport in a particular community or communities. The use of these research tools greatly assists in demonstrating the growth or decline of recreational sport in Tipperary from 1840 to 1880.

The nature of the source material, and the records available, impact on the research, where attempts are made to identify the social status of individuals involved in the organisation of recreational sport. To compensate for the absence of census returns, surrogate records are used.[84] These include sources ranging from land valuation records to town directories and rate books.

Cross referencing of data is a fundamental tenet of the research. All horse race meetings were cross referenced with those as recorded for Tipperary in the *Racing Calendar*, the official record book of the Turf Club. This assists in presenting arguments for regulation and control, as the horse racing industry continued to develop throughout the period under review. Similarly cross-referencing of data between the various newspapers also identified further data and proof of a specific activity, or the actions of an individual, which may have only received cursory treatment when viewed using one source alone. Cross-referencing also

[84] Family census return forms for Ireland, prior to 1901, were destroyed in a fire at the Public Record Office in 1922.

assisted in constructing maps, as places of play were identified and the venues and location of a club or sporting body were recorded.

Thesis Structure

As has been demonstrated by Mike Cronin and Roisín Higgins 'sports prior to the late nineteenth century were localised, infrequent, devoid of structure, relatively low in participation and violent'.[85] This study tests this statement by using the micro-data identified in the research, to demonstrate which sporting recreations were played and the degree to which such sport was practiced countywide. It explores participation levels in all sports countywide. It also assesses the degree to which any of the sporting recreations identified were structured and it defines some of the reasons why this came about, not alone from within the context of the county itself, but also from a national and international perspective. It also assesses the degree to which sport was violent.

Chapter One explores the role of the military in the sporting environment of Tipperary. Military personnel, though transient by the nature of their occupation, carried with them the games of home. This thesis clearly demonstrates that the military were regularly the instigators of sport in some of the towns and communities where they were garrisoned. The research also illustrates the dichotomy which existed in the rank and file. Specific examples are given which highlight the differences in sporting participation between officers and men and the one area where such differences were set aside, that of the cricket field, where participation was, in a sense, communal.

[85] Mike Cronin and Roisín Higgins. *Places we play: Ireland's sporting heritage*. (Cork, 2011), p. 17.

Chapter Two investigates the degree to which owners of country houses and estates were active in the patronage of recreational sport and their participation levels are also assessed. The terminology of country house is purposely used to define these homes, consciously steering clear of the term 'Big House' which has been a feature of many books and papers on this subject. Sport by its nature was an aspect of external life and the degree to which fields or parkland was set aside for sporting recreation is assessed. This thesis proves that the upper class owners of country estates were, along with the military officers, the principal agents through which sport developed and evolved in Tipperary.

Chapter Three examines the community of the hunt. The evidence demonstrates that hunting to hounds took place countywide, with hunt packs sometimes sharing hunting country, based on the compilation of a database of hunt meetings, locations and dates. The role played by gentlemen, whose seats were not in the county, is important in the development and growth of this sport and it highlights the fluid nature of sport and society in Victorian Ireland. Objections to the hunt are also discussed. The research clearly demonstrates that these were minor and that right up to the commencement of the Land Wars, in 1880, hunting to hounds was popular all over the county.

Chapter Four continues the equine theme, this time featuring horse racing and matters associated with the Turf. As the study commences pre-Famine the evolution of this major sporting industry in the county is explored. The research demonstrates how it moved from a sport which was quite localised and unstructured in the 1840s to one, which, in the 1860s, was invoking the assistance of Turf Club personnel in relation to handicapping and judging duties. The development of an integrated rail network in Ireland, much of which criss-crossed Tipperary, is also a key factor in the research. The degree to which it impacted on the sport is

assessed. The close links between horse racing and the hunt community are also explored. The chapter concludes with a case study of Cashel racecourse.

Chapter Five marks a change of direction in the thesis. In this chapter, the role of local individuals who participated in, or patronised, the various activities which constituted athletics and rowing, is explored. Many of these were not men of means, as preceding chapters will already have suggested. Critical to the research is the clarification and classification of individuals who were deemed amateur athletes. The degree to which men participated in athletic and rowing events and the prizes they won, call into question the validity of their activities and the exploration of this aspect of athletics forms one of the key research avenues of this chapter.

Chapter Six takes on the all-embracing mantle of ball games. Sports played throughout this period include cricket, hurling and football, though there is a caveat with regard to the latter. By football is meant all the various forms of folk football, which were played in the county, until the codified versions of association football and rugby football appeared in the 1870s. Ball games include stick and ball games and consequently cricket and hurling feature prominently. Lawn tennis featured as mainly a country house activity and this is covered in Chapter Two. Patronage was a key factor in the growth of cricket and this forms an important aspect of the research on this sport. This chapter also investigates the degree to which boys attended public school in Great Britain and the impact, if any, which they had on the sporting environment of the county.

Conclusion

Following on from the research conducted by Hunt for county Westmeath, my study adds to the body of research which now constitutes the historiography of sport in an Irish context. My study goes one step further by exploring pre-Famine sport at a micro-level, a topic which has not previously received attention from academia, apart from the recent study by Kelly. By commencing at 1840, my study is ground breaking and pushes the knowledge of sporting activity in Ireland before the Great Famine, which is a psychological time-frame barrier.

Another key feature of the research is that it challenges the widely perceived notion that hurling was in decline in the post-Famine pre-GAA era and on the cusp of oblivion. By utilising the Petty Sessions records and documentary evidence from the local press, my research shows that such was not the case. What the research into pre-GAA hurling further does, is that it brings recreational sport recreation down to the lower levels of society. The study is then inclusive, encompassing as it does the patronage role of lords and gentlemen and the participation of the lower class members of society. Neither is it gender biased. The role and participation of women is also assessed, particularly among the hunt community, on the archery field and the lawn tennis court.

The thematic approach to the subject, which constitutes the sporting environment, permitted parallels between sporting patronage, especially horse racing and the community of the hunt. The thesis demonstrates how fluid society was and how recreational sport in Tipperary adapted to fashions of sport, as they became popularised, more usually among the middle and upper classes throughout the British Isles. The role of the public schoolboy in this respect is a new area of study in the historiography of Irish sport. It is new insofar as the schools and colleges were in England and not grammar schools in Ireland or Trinity College Dublin.

As a study of recreational sport in Tipperary, from 1840-1880, this thesis is a microcosm of how sport in rural Ireland moved from being an irregular ritual to one which became codified and recorded, to paraphrase Guttman's work.[86] In its entirety, this thesis explores the emergence of modern sport in one Irish county. The thesis argues that the seeds of modern sport were sown by the promotion, interest and enthusiasm on the part of the gentry and the garrison in the decades before sports were codified and regulated. In all this, the thesis makes a major contribution to sports historiography as it concentrates on the pre-modern era, where participation in sport has been understood as limited. The thesis challenges the overarching narrative that sees the emergence of modern sport as predominantly an urban process and explores instead an alternative model in which patronage and the social stability of the post-Famine economic boom can be used to understand how organised sport came into being.

[86] Allen Guttman, *From ritual to record: the nature of modern sports* (New York, 1978).

Chapter 1: Sport and the Military

Introduction

This chapter explores the involvement of the military in various sporting recreations in county Tipperary. Military personnel stationed in the county had a substantial role in the growth and development of several sports and one of the aims of this chapter is to explore the extent of their role. While sport and the British military have received attention for a later time frame, especially from 1880, this chapter chronicles the forty-year period prior to this in Tipperary, one of many rural locations across Great Britain and Ireland where the military had a key role in popularising sport.[1]

The chapter commences with an overview of the military stations in Tipperary during this period, and the numbers of officers, men and cavalry horses which were present in the towns and communities. The chapter also explores the degree to which there was social interaction between the military and the communities in which they were stationed.

The military played a critical patronage role. This observation is central to this thesis. Tony Mason and Eliza Riedi have shown how the sporting life of the military took on a new significance with the commencement of the 'Army Athletic Meeting, held annually since 1876.'[2] This study seeks to explore the impact which the military had on sport, not only prior to the commencement date of Mason and Riedi's study, but also within an Irish context. Using data derived principally from the Tipperary press, arguments are presented which

[1] See especially Tony Mason and Eliza Reidi. *Sport and the Military: The British Armed Forces 1880–1960*, (Cambridge, 2010).
[2] Mason and Riedi. *Sport and the military*, pp 16-17.

demonstrate that the military had a major impact on the growth and development of recreational sport in Tipperary between the years 1840 and 1880. This chapter does not encompass all military sporting activity in Tipperary during this period. For example, Chapter Five contains a discussion of the military's role in the promotion of athletics meetings. Engaging in that discussion provides for greater continuity in this thesis's assessment of the development of athletics in Tipperary.

Overview of Military Stations in Tipperary

In 1837, there were eleven military barracks in county Tipperary. These were comprised of cavalry barracks at Cahir, Clogheen and Fethard; an artillery barracks at Clonmel; and infantry barracks at Carrick-on-Suir, Cashel, Clonmel, Nenagh, Roscrea, Templemore and Tipperary. In that year, in south Tipperary, Cahir had accommodation for twenty-three officers, 346 non-commissioned officers (NCOs) and privates, and 292 horses.[3] Clogheen had two troops of cavalry[4] while Clonmel, a parliamentary borough, was described as having an 'extensive barracks for artillery, cavalry and infantry'.[5] Carrick-on-Suir, initially a cavalry barracks, with accommodation for eight officers, 140 NCOs and privates, was then occupied by infantry.[6] Cashel, the other parliamentary borough in the county, had barrack accommodation for one field officer, six other officers, 146 NCOs and privates, and stabling for three horses.[7] Fethard was described as having an 'extensive barracks at present occupied

[3] Samuel Lewis, *A topographical dictionary of Ireland*. Vol. I (London, 1837), p. 238.
[4] Lewis. *Topographical dictionary*. Vol I, p. 341.
[5] Lewis. *Topographical dictionary*. Vol I, p. 369.
[6] Lewis. *Topographical dictionary*. Vol I, p. 276.
[7] Lewis. *Topographical dictionary*. Vol I, p. 285.

by infantry'.[8] This barracks later acted as a backup cavalry barracks for Cahir. Tipperary town had a temporary barracks, with accommodation for 100 men.[9]

In the north of the county there were three military barracks. Nenagh could accommodate one field officer; twelve other officers, 208 NCOs and privates, and four horses.[10] Roscrea barracks could accommodate seven officers, 106 NCOs and privates, and four horses.[11] Templemore, the largest of all the barracks at that time, had accommodation for fifty-four officers, 1,500 men, and thirty horses (see Figure 4).[12] In total, where specific figures are available for six barracks, there was provision for at least 112 officers and 2,454 NCOs and privates, in addition to '100 men' at Tipperary and 'two troops of cavalry' at Clogheen. The preponderance of barracks in the south riding of the county may be linked to a communication which Colonel Sorrell, secretary to the commander for the forces in Ireland, had with the under-secretary, William Gregory, in 1822, where an 'anxiety [was] expressed by magistrates and gentry in Tipperary to have military protection'.[13] Much of the civil unrest in pre-Famine Tipperary was caused by the activities of secret societies, notably the Whiteboy movement. The collection of tithes was a constant cause of friction. The movement created great unrest as the 'Whiteboys imposed their own irregular and highly idiosyncratic system of rough justice on those they deemed guilty of damaging the common welfare of the peasantry.'[14] Agrarian violence resulted in countrywide agitation and assault against the person. Similar troubles were also affecting families in county Offaly where, it was reported,

[8] Lewis. *Topographical dictionary*. Vol I, p. 626.
[9] Lewis. *Topographical dictionary*. Vol II, p. 635.
[10] Lewis. *Topographical dictionary*. Vol II, p. 423.
[11] Lewis. *Topographical dictionary*. Vol II, p. 527.
[12] Lewis. *Topographical dictionary*. Vol II, p. 610.
[13] Virginia Crossman, 'Irish barracks in the 1820s and 1830s: a political perspective' in *The Irish Sword*, Vol. XVII, No. 68 (1989), p. 212.
[14] Noreen Higgins. *Tipperary's tithe war 1830-1838 : parish accounts of resistance against a church tax* (Tipperary, 2002), p. 25.

that ‘not a night passes without an outrage being committed in the county which bids fair to out rival – in deeds of blood and savage barbarity, neighbouring Tipperary’.[15]

There is no doubt that there was a strong military presence in Tipperary. There was no part of the county that was not within close proximity to a military barracks, which provided security to land owners, specifically those whose loyalty was to a United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

1848 was a year of rebellion in Ireland, and especially in Tipperary, as the Young Ireland movement sought to break the Union. An infantry barracks at New Inn, erected ‘about 1815,’ was, at that time, occupied by the police.[16] Yet, while Templemore did have the capacity for a large force of men the evidence suggests that it was rarely at full capacity because of the amount of military accommodation elsewhere in the county. In 1847-48 the 64th Regiment of Foot had eleven officers and 300 men present in Templemore. The 70th Regiment, which shared the barracks at that time, had 500 men, of which 300 were recruits.[17] Though it was a large military presence in an Irish market town, it was still well below full occupancy. But such were the vagaries of military life that there was no guarantee that military numbers would be maintained at any given time. In the early 1840s ‘to the great displeasure of local businessmen and politicians, no regiment was based in Clonmel’.[18] Things did improve and over the remainder of the century the total number of troops in Clonmel, despite some dips, ‘was seldom less than 350’.[19] When the Tipperary Light Infantry (TLI) departed Clonmel for

[15] Ciarán Reilly. *The Irish land agent, 1830-60. The case of King’s County* (Dublin, 2014), p. 69.

[16] Paul M. Kerrigan, ‘Barracks in Ireland, 1847’ in *The Irish Sword*, Vol. XIX No. 77, Summer 1995, p. 232.
[17] Martin Loft, *Lieutenant Harry Loft of Louth and the 64th Regiment of Foot (Second Staffordshire)* (Leek, 2003), p. 65.
[18] O’Donnell, *Clonmel 1840-1900*, p. 28.
[19] O’Donnell, *Clonmel 1840-1900*, p. 29.

Tralee, in 1855, twenty-one officers, three hundred and sixty-four men, thirty-nine women and thirty children, boarded a special train to Killarney.[20] These numbers imply that the barrack accommodation was quite high, with separate married quarters. That the war in the Crimea was raging at this time must be factored into these figures, as on the return of the soldiers from the war, militias raised locally were disembodied. That the TLI had such large numbers suggests that it was a means of deriving income locally, with accommodation and food included. When the war in the Crimea ended, trouble of a different nature erupted in Nenagh.

The North Tipperary Militia returned to barracks at Nenagh in July 1856, preparatory to being dismissed. As the militiamen were wearing uniforms which were only issued during the previous April, the men were requested to hand them back on 7 July. One man refused to hand over his clothes and this sparked a series of events which resulted in the soldiers from Templemore barracks having to March to Nenagh in an attempt to quell the mutiny.[21] The militiamen rioted in the centre of the town. However, order was restored by the end of the week though there were casualties on both sides, as well as some civilian casualties. The militia was disembodied on 15 July.[22] By 1857, when the war was over, it was reported that there were 'no military at Carrick-on-Suir, Thurles, Nenagh, Roscrea and only a few at Clonmel'.[23]

[20] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 1 Dec. 1855.
[21] *Nenagh Guardian*, 16 July 1856; 19 July 1856. David Murphy. "The battle of the breeches: the Nenagh muting, July 1856" in *Tipperary Historical Journal 2001*, pp 139-45; David Murphy. *Ireland and the Crimean war*. (Dublin, 2002), p. 202.
[22] Murphy, *Ireland and the Crimean war*, p. 204.
[23] *Tipperary Free Press*, 9 June 1857.

In 1865, the removal of troops from Templemore led to 'an important meeting' of the Town Commissioners 'for the purpose of adopting a memorial to his Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, praying that Her Majesty's troops might not be removed from the garrison of that town...as the inhabitants felt that the removal of the troops must prove injurious to the commercial interests of the town'.[24] This was a core fact of the military presence in a community. There was no heavy industry, as in England, no large scale mill or factory enterprises which would sustain some of the Tipperary towns. In their place were large numbers of, primarily, single men dependent on service industries, whose presence was an economic boon to a local economy, especially during the growth economy. Coupled with the cavalry at Cahir barracks, where equine care was paramount, the added local benefit was advantageous to the town of Cahir and its hinterland. It is little wonder that the businessmen of Clonmel and Templemore were aggrieved when military numbers were low, or that a threat of their removal was seen as detrimental to the economy of the respective towns.

The 1861 census returns for Ireland were the first in which specific military data was recorded. In 1841 and 1851 the numbers of army and navy personnel had not been included in the census tables.[25] The number of military included in the population of county Tipperary in 1861 amounted to 1,715, and in 1871 the figure was 1,833. Of the latter figure 1,217 were natives of England and Wales; thirty-one of Scotland; twenty-nine were born abroad; and one was born at sea. What these figures clearly demonstrate is that of the 1,833 soldiers in Tipperary in 1871, 1,278 (69.7 percent) were born outside of Ireland. This was a large body of men who brought with them new ways of doing things, as well as recreational pursuits. The remaining 555 men (30.3 percent) were born in Ireland and what this figure showed was

[24] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 28 January 1865.
[25] *Census of Ireland 1871, Part 1 area, houses and population: also the ages, civil condition, occupations, birthplaces, and education of the people. Vol. II, province of Munster, No. 5 county of Tipperary.* (Dublin, 1874), p. 770.

that not all the Irishmen serving in the army were sent abroad. Many of them were garrisoned in Ireland.

As is shown in Table 2, it was only in Templemore and Cahir that the military had a significant presence, when viewed as a percentage of the town population at the time of the 1871 and 1881 censuses. When the number of military and their dependants are viewed as a percentage of all county Tipperary this is quite low, at below one percent. However, if the populations of the towns in which they are based are examined, exclusive of non-military towns, and the actual numbers serving in Tipperary alone are included, the proportion rises to 5.05 percent. When the soldiers' dependants are included the proportion rises to 7.21 percent.[26]

Table 2: Population of towns and military barracks, 1841-1881 (Source: census returns 1871, 1881)

Cahir	**1841**	**1851**	**1861**	**1871**	**1881**
Population	3,668	3,719	2,985	2,694	2,469
Military and dependants				481	411
Military and dependants percentage of total population				17.85%	16.64%
Carrick on Suir	**1841**	**1851**	**1861**	**1871**	**1881**
Population	8,369	7,512	5,530	6,305	5,417
Military and dependants				73	64
Military and dependants percentage of total population				1.16%	1.18%
Clonmel	**1841**	**1851**	**1861**	**1871**	**1881**
Population	13,010	15,185	11,604	10,038	9,273
Military and dependants				438	500
Military and dependants percentage of total population				4.36%	5.39%

[26] The military and dependants figure is 2,231. The total town returns, where census returns for the eight military barracks are available, was 30,931.

Fethard	**1841**	**1851**	**1861**	**1871**	**1881**
Population	3,915	2,767	2,303	2,106	1,926
Military and dependants				124	71
Military and dependants percentage of total population				5.89%	3.68%
Nenagh	**1841**	**1851**	**1861**	**1871**	**1881**
Population	7,761	8,651	6,284	5,080	5,422
Military and dependants				80	66
Military and dependants percentage of total population				1.57%	1.22%
Clogheen	**1841**	**1851**	**1861**	**1871**	**1881**
Population	2,049	1,562	1,347	1,317	1,154
Military and dependants				81	55
Military and dependants percentage of total population				6.15%	4.77%
Templemore	**1841**	**1851**	**1861**	**1871**	**1881**
Population	3,685	4,375	4,138	3,497	2,800
Military and dependants				1,119	517
Military and dependants percentage of total population				32%	18.46%
Tipperary Town	**1841**	**1851**	**1861**	**1871**	**1881**
Population	1,572	1,790	1,224	1,227	2,470
Military and dependants					547
Military and dependants percentage of total population					22.15%
Co. Tipperary	**1841**	**1851**	**1861**	**1871**	**1881**
Population	435,553	331,567	249,106	216,702	199,602
Military and dependants			1,715	1,833	1,563
Military and dependants percentage of total population			0.68%	0.84%	0.78%

When towns are isolated and specific barrack data is analysed the results show that Templemore, Cahir and, latterly, Tipperary town had military numbers far above the county average. The level of military personnel in these towns and indeed the other towns of

Tipperary, had a strong economic bearing on these communities.[27] The economic prosperity of these market towns, and the surrounding communities was due in no small part to the year round interaction which they had with the military personnel. Similarly, the military were also instrumental in the participation and promotion of various sporting activities and it is to this that the focus of the chapter now turns.

Sport and the Military: Cricket

The next sections looks at the evidence for military participation, either as patrons or participants, in the growth and support of recreational sport in Tipperary. This section is not intended to be a roll call of the various regiments and personnel who took part, but rather an assessment of the contribution which the military made to the sporting environment of Tipperary. Though other aspects of cricket are examined in greater detail in Chapter Six, the focus here is to explore the role of the military. The chapter concludes by assessing the outcome of military involvement in Tipperary sport.

Between 1840 an 1880, whenever a regiment was transferred to a barracks in Tipperary, sport quickly became part of the life of many of the personnel associated with it. Whether it was a cavalry barracks, Cahir or Fethard, or an infantry or artillery barracks, Carrick-on-Suir, Clonmel, Nenagh, Templemore or Tipperary, sport, and at an early juncture cricket, became key elements in the recreational activities of the officers and other ranks. A note in the local press in 1840 indicated that the Board of Ordnance had directed that cricket pitches were to be laid down in Cahir, Fethard and Templemore for the use of troops.[28] Officers, NCOs, men and civilian players regularly participated together on the cricket field, though there were

[27] The impact of the garrison is still evident in these towns today.
[28] *Tipperary Free Press*, 22 April 1840.

times when officers from one company took to the field against the officers of another company, particularly when the garrison was large enough to accommodate such numbers, as was the case in Templemore and Clonmel.[29] It was not that the military were wholly responsible for the transfer of cricket to the local communities but they were primary facilitators and promoters of the game.[30] At this time the civilian participants were from the gentry in Tipperary.[31]

Cricket was unique in terms of ball sports, in that it had codified laws dating back to 1744.[32] It had a regulating body, the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), and it was a game which, by 1840, was widespread in Great Britain. It was beginning to make inroads as a popular sporting recreation in much of Ireland in the pre-Famine years. As Con Costello has shown in his study of the Curragh Camp, 'sporting fixtures brought not only the military and civilians together, but the cricket pitch also encouraged the officers and other ranks into a social mix'.[33] Initially, it was the officer class alone that featured in the various sports reports. Cricket was somewhat different, as reports regularly referred to a mix of officers and rank and file members appearing on the same team. That said, Mason and Riedi in their study have observed that 'cricket was an officer's game [and that] an ex-NCO commented on the discomfort of private soldiers included in officer dominated teams'.[34]

[29] *Tipperary Free* Press, 18 May 1875; Clonmel *Chronicle*, 30 June 1880.
[30] Chapter 6 also deals with some transference aspects of sport from the United Kingdom to Ireland by way of returning public school pupils.
[31] The Palliser and Gough families from south Tipperary and the Carden or Trant families in north Tipperary being some examples.
[32] Peter Wynne-Thomas. *The history of cricket; from the Weald to the World* (London, 1997), p. 35
[33]Con Costello, *A most delightful station: The British Army on the Curragh of Kildare, Ireland, 1855-1922.* (Cork, 1996), p. 199.
[34] Mason and Reidi. *Sport and the military*, p. 24.

In 1843, one of the earliest references to cricket in Tipperary featured the Cahir club which played the officers of the 15th Hussars, a fashionable regiment.[35] In this instance the Cahir team was composed of the principal residents of Cahir and its hinterland. The officers were drawn to them as much as by class association as they were by sport, in this instance, cricket. The fact that there was a cricket team in existence in Cahir, established around 1841, indicated that the area was receptive to the development and spread of cricket. Here was a group of men, drawn principally from the public school educated officer class, that could interact, socially and sportingly, with a similar number of Cahir gentlemen, who, in the manner of their social and recreational activity, were not that far removed from their social equals in Great Britain or other parts of Ireland. The markers of class – accent, education, deportment – were not as obvious to English officers serving in Ireland in a way that they would have been in England. Society was more fluid in Ireland as there was a mix of catholic and protestant middle class gentry. The distinctions between them would not have been easily recognised by newly arrived officers. Unlike Australia and the other colonial territories, which comprised the British Empire, Ireland was not a colony: it was integral to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland under the terms of the 1800 Act of Union.[36] The role of the military in Ireland was no different to that in any other part of Great Britain – in theory. Officers, cavalry men and other ranks were as likely to be stationed in Ireland as they were to receive a similar posting to a barracks in any part of Great Britain.

An example of this deployment may be seen at Templemore, when Lieut. Harry Loft and his regiment, the 64th Regiment of Foot, arrived there, in May 1847. Upon arrival and after settling in, one of the first things they did was to establish a cricket team, which, Loft noted,

[35] *Tipperary Free Press*, 19 July 1843.
[36] Denis Judd, *Empire: the British Imperial experience from 1765 to the present* (London, 1996), pp 40-1.

had ‘a capital field close to the barracks’.[37] That same year, officers from the garrison featured on the Templemore team which competed against the Ashbrook Union CC, from Durrow, Co. Laois.[38] In July 1862, the Templemore garrison team defeated the Templemore town team, which, the *Tipperary Advocate* commented, ‘was no great victory; the latter being but two seasons in existence and most of the opponents being professionals, formerly belonging to the Surrey and other crack clubs’.[39] Names that appeared in this match report could not be located in the Surrey Cricket Club records of the period.[40]

The military were involved in 226 of the 918 cricket matches identified in Tipperary between 1840 and 1880, representing twenty-five percent of all matches for this period (Table 3). Twenty-five of these matches involved military teams playing home and away, for instance Templemore barracks against Nenagh barracks; or Clonmel barracks against Cahir barracks. The overwhelming majority, 201, featured military teams against civilian teams, indicating consistent levels of interaction between the military and the sporting middle classes and the gentry around Tipperary. Con Costello has argued that on occasions such as these ‘the officers and men experienced a rare social mixing when they also met up with teams from the civilian clubs.’[41] The data for Tipperary seems to challenge this however, suggesting that the military’s cricketing interaction with local communities was anything but rare and that military teams constituted an important cohort of those active in cricket in Tipperary.

[37] Loft. *Lieutenant Harry Loft*, p. 65.
[38] Ashbrook Union cricket club score book 1846-1849, ff 42, 61.
[39] *Tipperary Advocate*, 12 July 1862.
[40] Jeff Hancock, Librarian/archivist Surrey CCC, pers. comm. 10 May 2002.
[41] Costello, *A most delightful station*, p. 178.

Table 3: Military team participation at cricket in Co. Tipperary, 1840-1880

Year	Total	Military Total	Percent of Total
1840	0	0	0.00
1841	0	0	0.00
1842	0	0	0.00
1843	1	1	100.00
1844	0	0	0.00
1845	0	0	0.00
1846	4	4	100.00
1847	2	0	0.00
1848	2	0	0.00
1849	14	8	57.14
1850	5	3	60.00
1851	11	6	54.55
1852	8	8	100.00
1853	0	0	0.00
1854	0	0	0.00
1855	0	0	0.00
1856	1	1	100.00
1857	2	1	50.00
1858	2	0	0.00
1859	2	2	100.00
1860	7	3	42.86
1861	2	2	100.00
1862	13	6	46.15
1863	13	5	38.46
1864	21	9	42.86
1865	22	5	22.73
1866	27	6	22.22
1867	33	17	51.52
1868	55	23	41.82
1869	44	9	20.45
1870	35	12	34.29
1871	26	8	30.77
1872	47	15	31.91
1873	86	12	13.95
1874	77	5	6.49
1875	84	7	8.33
1876	80	8	10.00
1877	51	2	3.92
1878	55	5	9.09
1879	37	7	18.92
1880	49	26	53.06
Total	918	226	24.62

Military teams were prominent in the early diffusion of cricket playing in the county. Initially these teams were comprised principally of career officers who had a keen knowledge of cricket. As the game expanded in the county, so too did the participation on the military teams of non-commissioned officers and lower rank soldiers. Of the eighty-nine matches identified between 1840 and 1863, a military team participated in fifty. This represented just over fifty-six percent of the total number of matches recorded. Between 1864 and 1880, military teams were still a feature of cricket matches in Tipperary. Of the 829 matches recorded for this period, a military team participated in 176 of the 829 matches played, or 21.23 percent.

That the military integrated quickly with the local communities may be observed in the case of the 79th Cameron Highlanders, when stationed at Nenagh, in the late 1840s. They soon established their own cricket team after taking up residence in the local barracks. Several of the officers also turned out for the Nenagh club, prominent amongst them Lieut. Maitland.[42] An important degree of intermingling between the military and the civilian populations was apparent on the cricket field, and latterly on the rugby field. It has not been possible to identify if these meetings resulted from prior social engagements between officers and the local middle class, or if they were arranged simply as a sporting occasion. Essentially the British class structure was replicated in Ireland and the army functioned the same way in Ireland, except in terms of religion. While there was scope for intermingling on the cricket field between civilian teams and military selections, this intermingling was reserved for the officers when club functions took place. In September 1875, officers of the 50th and 53rd Regiments were among a long list of the upper and middle class community of Dundrum and its hinterland who received invitations to ‘a ball and supper, on a very extensive and

[42] *Nenagh Guardian*, 1 Sept. 1849; 12 Sept. 1849.

fashionable scale,' which was hosted by Dundrum CC.[43] Occasions such as this reinforced and underpinned class association with the military officers. This was but one aspect of the social life of the office class while stationed in Tipperary, or indeed during any posting in Ireland.

This section has given an overview of the role which the military played in the diffusion and support of cricket in Tipperary. While they did not set out to be pioneers in the county, the knowledge and support of the game which they brought with them coincided with its development in the county. It was a sporting symbiosis, one which greatly assisted in the promotion and development of cricket up to the end of the 1870s. Military officers were key members of civilian teams in the communities in which they were garrisoned. They had a lead role in the promotion and diffusion of cricket throughout the county. The leadership qualities which they brought to the cricket field were also deployed in other sporting spheres. Foremost among them was horse racing.

The Military and Horse Racing

This next section looks at the role which the military had in horse racing. While matters associated with the Turf feature in Chapter Four, specific reference is made here to the military involvement. This section looks at the apparent willingness of officers to become actively involved with race meetings. This support was given in a similar vein to that which they gave to cricket. Race meetings associated with a specific barracks were those to which soldiers naturally offered the most support. These meetings, in terms of patronage, required

[43] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 15 Sept. 1875.

sponsorship. The prizes on offer were contributed by the officers. Specific reference is made to the races at Cahir barracks, which was the principal cavalry barracks in the county.

Sport and the military, as the evidence from Tipperary and elsewhere shows, was something which did not remain within the confines of the garrison. Officers from various regiments appeared on the list of stewards and featured in the account of the fashionable people who attended. For the Nenagh races in April 1850, Lieut. Adam Maitland doubled up as secretary and clerk of the course.[44] A report of the races which appeared in the local press observed that much credit was due to 'the clerk of the course Adjutant Maitland, 79th Highlanders, for his untiring and active service in preparing the ground, having the "leaps" erected, and preserving regularity in the starting of the horses'. The report suggests a close relationship between the military officers and the landed and professional classes in Nenagh and its hinterland. This relationship was reinforced a short time later, as prior to their departure from Nenagh, the officers of the 79th Highlanders were treated to a banquet 'by the members of the Ormond Hunt Club and the gentry of Nenagh and its vicinity.'[45] The banquet was 'to testify their warm esteem and heartfelt regard towards them [the 79th Highlanders], to appreciate their noble conduct and exhalted character, in every point of view while stationed amongst us, and as a token of respectful regret at their intended departure.'

At Cahir barracks the cavalry regiments regularly hosted their own regimental races. In the 1870s alone the XIV Hussars; Inniskilling Dragoons; 4th Dragoon Guards; 7th Princess Royal Dragoon Guards; 5th (Princess Charlotte of Wales's (P.C.W.) Dragoon Guards; Queen's Bays; 3rd Dragoon Guards; and the 7th (Queen's Own) Hussars all hosted regimental

[44] *Nenagh Guardian*, 3 April 1850.
[45] *Nenagh Guardian*, 10 April 1850.

race meetings on military grounds associated with the barracks.[46] Irrespective of the regiment involved, the continuity and consistency of the race programme remained the same. The races took place in April at the end of the hunting season. After a busy winter season out with the hounds, the races gave the various regiments an opportunity of affording thanks to the owners and leaseholders of the lands over which they hunted. The 5th (P.C.W.) Dragoon Guards organised the 1876 races with exemplary efficiency. Major George Waller Vesey, Hon. Secretary, appeared to have covered all areas of interest. Vesey, a native of Co. Tyrone, subsequently held the office of High Sheriff of his home county in 1879, where he was also Deputy Lieutenant.[47] For the Cahir Garrison races, apart from taking race entries, there were several other tasks which the officers had to perform, leaving 'nothing undone to render the meeting successful'.[48]

One may infer that representations were made to the Waterford and Limerick Railway Company to make allowances for prospective travellers to Cahir on race day. The company advertised return fares at single rates, from both their Waterford and Limerick offices, including all intermediary stations to Cahir.[49] The races themselves proved successful. They further demonstrated that officer status brought with it financial implications, besides what could prove to be a distinguished career. Race purses were supplemented by contributions from officers of the regiment. As such, while not only facilitating race meetings, the officers were also net contributors to the races themselves. It was a regular aspect of officer and non-commissioned officer career paths, as entertainments in their respective messes were also

[46] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 4 April 1871; 24 April 1872; 16 April 1873; 18 April 1874; 10 April 1875; 19 April 1876; 25 April 1877; 24 April 1878; 19 April 1879; 3 April 1880.
[47] Sir Bernard Burke, *A genealogical and heraldic history of the landed gentry of Ireland* (London, 1904), p. 620.
[48] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 19 April 1876.
[49] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 15 April 1876.

'financed from member's subscriptions and mess funds'.[50] J.D. Campbell has noted that 'during the nineteenth century ... British Army officers were of primarily upper-class origins, with a majority coming from landed families'.[51] At one level, the life of an officer in Tipperary was no different to that of an officer in any other barracks in Great Britain and Ireland. On another level, however, there were issues relating to religion and political affiliation. Officers were likely to associate with families who were supportive of British administration in Ireland. Though prize money at races, to which officers contributed, could vary from £20 given as prize money for a farmer's race to 'three magnificent challenge cups,' these figures demonstrated that when one was an officer one was expected to evince a certain largesse.[52] But it was one which fitted in very well to society life in mid-Victorian Tipperary.

At Cahir, perhaps the most telling aspect of the 1876 race meeting was the list of 'those invited to the luncheon at the Garrison races,' published in the aftermath of the races.[53] That the 'attendance was large and highly aristocratic' is seen from the names published. Lords and Ladies from counties Kilkenny, Tipperary and Waterford led the list of those invited. This was supplemented by other landed gentry from these and other counties, demonstrating the wide reach of the military social network and the level of support which was afforded them by those in attendance. For the officer corps field sports 'went beyond mere leisure pastimes. They were professionally important as well.'[54] If proof were needed that the army

[50] Costello, *A most delightful station*, p. 177.
[51] J.D. Campbell. ''Training for sport is training for war': Sport and the transformation of the British Army, 1860-1914' in *The International Journal for the History of Sport,* Vol. 17, No. 4 (December 2000), p. 22.
[52] Sample prizes at Carabineers regimental steeple chases at Cahir in April 1867. *Clonmel Chronicle*, 24 April 1867.
[53] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 22 April 1876.
[54] Campbell. 'Training for sport is training for war,' p. 23.

presence in Tipperary was appreciated, these people showed it in the way they supported the race meeting, which was also a very sociable occasion.

The evidence suggests that were it not for the military officers there would have been few, if any, race meetings in the district of Cahir. From 1860 to 1880 inclusive, the only years for which no evidence has been identified for military races near Cahir are for 1868, 1869 and 1870. During the winter months of those years, the garrison hounds hunted as regularly as in previous years, indicating that sporting diversions were still taking place.

The provision of horse racing, while primarily centred on regimental races, still catered for farmer's races. In February 1841, the 17th Lancers held steeplechases near Cahir.[55] This was followed up, in October, by another local meeting, though on grounds north of the town, at which one of the stewards was a Lieutenant Colonel with the 5th Dragoon Guards. From late 1841 to 1860 the pattern of horse racing in Cahir was one of civilian and military meetings on an infrequent basis. There is no evidence to suggest that there was racing each year. Fifteen meetings have been identified between 1840 and 1859. Both military and civilian personnel were involved in setting up these meetings. When meetings were not specifically organised by military officers the list of stewards still included leading officers from the Cahir garrison.[56] These serve to indicate the administrative sporting role which the officers held within the local Cahir society. Similar roles were also held by officers at Clonmel, Nenagh and Templemore.[57] With their promotion of local horse race meetings, the officers, especially the cavalry officers with their riding expertise, were to the fore in the advancement of these meetings. This was especially so at Cahir where their support of racing in the two

[55] *Tipperary Constitution*, 5 Feb. 1841.
[56] *Tipperary Free Press*, 14 Oct. 1846; 7 July 1857.
[57] *Tipperary Free Press*, 13 July 1850. *Nenagh Guardian*, 2 Feb. 1850; 24 April 1861.

decades after the end of the Crimean War made them a welcome feature of societal life in and around the town. Fields used for the races were often 'kindly lent to [the military] by the farmers without any charge whatever.'[58] There was a symbiotic relationship, one which benefitted the town of Cahir. As is demonstrated in the next section this was also apparent with the support of the officers for hunting to hounds.

This section on the military has provided an overview of the impact which military officers had on the horse racing community of Tipperary. This was especially so at Cahir where a large cavalry barracks was sited. There, for almost twenty years, the military provided an annual race meeting. The races gave the military officers an opportunity to meet socially with the gentry and create social bonds. These bonds were very important when the daughters of the Tipperary gentry sought out marriage partners.

The Military and Hunting to Hounds

This section demonstrates the level of support which the officer class gave to the various hunt packs. It also shows that, in the case of Cahir and Templemore barracks, officers provided hunt packs of their own. Those officers could, especially from the middle of the 1860s, afford considerable time for hunting to hounds, as well as racing and cricket. This is indicative that society was stable and peaceful. The country was, in general, undergoing a period of relative calm. That this calmness was to be abruptly curtailed by the onset of the Land War is only briefly touched on as the evidence suggests that the full rigours of the campaign to stop the hunt did not impinge on the hunt community of Tipperary during the time frame under review.

[58] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 25 May 1861.

Reports in the Tipperary press reflect Tom Hunt's evidence from Westmeath where he found that 'hunting was central to the lifestyle of many members' of military regiments.[59] The sons of the Anglo-Irish gentry followed a career path in the military as a means of confirming social status. Ireland lacked the industrial base which England had, and with limited career prospects in the civil administration in Dublin Castle, a career path in the army was a prudent choice, unless they wanted to go into the church. Furthermore, in the army, 'they had plenty of time to indulge their passion for field sports,' something which they would have in common with officers of English origin.[60] In Aldershot, when a newly posted officer asked his commanding officer for leave to go out hunting, he was informed that 'as long as there is one subaltern left in the barracks to do the work on a hunting day, I do not want you to ask for leave. Always go.'[61] This suggests that there was an acceptance among officers of a social obligation to follow the hunt in those communities where a hunt took place. As is shown in Chapter Three, an officer would have been hard pressed not to find a hunt pack in County Tipperary, especially after 1860. In December 1865, the *Nenagh Guardian* newspaper reported that the 11th Depot battalion in Templemore had been sent to Newry and Enniskillen to be replaced by the 59th Regiment from Glasgow.[62] The reason assigned for the transfer of the troops was that it was strongly suspected that the regiment was tainted with Fenianism. As the 11th Depot prepared to depart Templemore the report continued:

> the removal of the Battalion is a source of much regret to the inhabitants of this town and neighbourhood. The officers were justly respected by all parties, as no gentlemen could do more to create amusement, and not one of the least losses felt will be that of their splendid pack of harriers, which afforded such capital sport during the past few years.

[59] Tom Hunt. *Sport and society*, p. 15.
[60] Spiers. 'Army organisation,' p. 342.
[61] Elizabeth A. Muenger, *The British military dilemma in Ireland*, (Dublin, 1991), p. 26.
[62] *Nenagh Guardian*, Dec. 1865

All aspects of hunting - fox, stag and otter hunting - were integral parts of the life of an officer in rural Tipperary. While several officers followed the hunt with one of the many packs which were established in the county, the garrisons at Cahir and Templemore supported their own packs of hounds. For these to be successful, they needed the support and compliance of the local landowners and this, it would appear, was something which was readily given, especially near Cahir. Captain Poyntz ran his hounds from the Templemore garrison in 1840 but there is insufficient evidence to determine whether the various regiments there maintained hunt packs more than occasionally. At Cahir the situation was very different. The regiments stationed there were regular supporters of hunting to hounds and especially the hunting of hares. Hunt packs were maintained at the barracks for a few seasons between 1840 and 1860, but between 1861 and 1880 the regiments there sent out a hunt pack each winter, irrespective of which regiment was resident. Data compiled for these packs indicates that hunting was most common in the season 1879-1880, with fifty-six meets scheduled, initially under the auspices of the 19th Hussars Harriers, and from 1879, of the 7th Hussars Harriers. The Tipperary Fox Hounds were well established as the primary fox hunting pack in south Tipperary. The military in their pursuit of the hare were never in opposition to the fox hunting community and neither were they a threat to them.

As has been demonstrated in the previous section, there were very amicable and friendly relations between the military officers and the inhabitants of Cahir and its vicinity. On the departure of the 12th Royal Lancers from the town, after a period of almost twelve months, an address was presented to Col. Oakes, C.B. and the officers, noting the regret of the people of Cahir at the departure of the regiment.[63] When news of their impending removal was announced it was observed that ‘in the racing field – during the hunting season – and though

[63] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 22 Sept. 1866.

last not least, as will be admitted by our neighbouring *elite,* (*sic*) in the ball-room, the 12th left nothing undone to spiritedly uphold the well-known hospitable and sporting character of the regiment'.[64] A similar address was presented to Lieut-Colonel Somerset J.G. Calthorpe and the officers of the 5th Dragoon Guards when they departed Cahir in 1864.[65]

While fox and hare hunting were not novel aspects of the Tipperary sporting scene, some military officers were active in two other aspects of hunting, that of hawking and otter hunting. In late 1856, Captain Salvin, late of the York Rifles, visited south Tipperary and he brought with him his hawks and John Barr, his falconer. Each time the hawks were set to flight their exploits received complimentary reviews in the local press. Not only that, they also attracted many people 'from the booted Meltonian to the brogued countryman, whose stout galloway was taken from the plough to join the ardor (*sic*) of the chase'.[66] Such was the desire to keep up with the chase that 'ladyes fayre (*sic*) quitted their equipages, and on foot, proceeded through the fields'.[67] Captain Salvin departed Clonmel in January 1857, but not without emulation. His falconry exploits drew admiration, which resulted in Henry Langley acquiring 'some splendid birds' to keep the amusement going once it was revived owing to 'its introduction here by Captain Salvin'.[68]

In both the north and south of the county there is some evidence of otter hunting. Though the Redmonston Otter Hounds were active in the summer of 1868, there is little evidence that they lasted much beyond this.[69] Similarly, Mr. Hill brought his otter hounds to Dromineer

[64] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 25 Aug. 1866.
[65] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 6 Aug. 1864.
[66] *Tipperary Free Press*, 28 Nov. 1856.
[67] *Tipperary Free Press*, 19 Dec. 1856.
[68] *Tipperary Free Press*, 6 Dec. 1859; 9 Dec. 1859.
[69] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 27 June 1868.

and Youghal, in the north of the county, for the summer of 1870.[70] Also in the summer of 1870, Lieut. Green, 70th Regiment, joined the detachment at Nenagh barracks where he brought with him 'a splendid pack of otter hounds'.[71] His stay was brief, but on the departure of his regiment the *Nenagh Guardian* noted that it was 'long since the removal of soldiers awoke such a strong feeling of regret in the civilians'.[72] One of the principal causes of regret was that Lieut. Green had afforded 'genuine sporting excitement' while stationed in the town.

This section has assessed the added value which the military officers afforded to the hunting communities of Tipperary. It was primarily focussed on the community around Cahir barracks where several harrier packs were maintained by successive regiments from 1860. While the country hunted over often overlapped other hunt packs, the choice of quarry was different and as such, there was space for packs to operate independent of each other. Invitations extended to estate owners and retired military personnel to hunt with military packs strengthened the bond between military and community. These bonds were further connected with reciprocal invitations offered to military personnel to attend country house recreational activities, the next aspect of military life in Tipperary which is looked at.

The Military and Country House Games

The officer class essentially mixed with their own social sphere, as has been shown. This section looks at the level of officer attendance at country house functions and assesses the degree to which officer participation enhanced country house games. Other aspects of

[70] *Nenagh Guardian*, 11 May 1870.
[71] *Nenagh Guardian*, 15 June 1870.
[72] *Nenagh Guardian*, 6 Aug. 1870.

country house sport are examined in greater detail in Chapter Two, but this section assesses the military involvement in terms of patronage, support and participation.

As far as outdoor pursuits, and specifically those which could take place behind estate or garrison walls, were concerned, archery was a very popular occasion for the mingling of officers and various members of the local landowners in Tipperary from the late 1850s. Officers were in regular attendance at 'archery prize meetings' in Templemore, Nenagh, Clonmel, and Cahir.[73] In May 1858, at a meeting of the Templemore Archery Club which opened the season's shooting on the cricket ground at the Priory, officers from the town garrison joined the members.[74] Later that month, the *Nenagh Guardian* noted that 'a large party, consisting of the elite of the town and surrounding country, assembled on the Military Parade Ground, to practice the justly favourite and interesting amusement of archery…The sport was excellent … This being over, there was a capital race between the horses of Colonel Irwin, Captain Triton, and Dr. Manfold, the Colonel's being the winner…and the amusement was brought to a conclusion by a grand ball and supper given by the officers of the garrison to the surrounding gentry, and the officers of the Limerick garrison.'[75] One year later in Nenagh, the Ormond Archery Club held meetings in a field adjoining the military barracks. Once more it was reported that 'the attendance included a large array of the elite of the surrounding country and the officers of the Templemore garrison were also present'.[76]

Similarly, the emergence of lawn tennis as a sporting recreation in the mid-1870s saw many members of the local officer corps invited to various meetings. Officers at Clonmel barracks competed against each other in March 1878, with the victors 'warmly congratulated by the

[73] *Nenagh Guardian*, 5 June 1858; 30 May 1860; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 17 Aug. 1861; 17 Sept. 1862.
[74] *Nenagh Guardian*, 12 May 1858.
[75] *Nenagh Guardian*, 5 June 1858.
[76] *Nenagh Guardian*, 11 June 1859.

numerous spectators of the game.'[77] Some of the newly arrived officers also brought the latest sporting fashions with them. This occurred with lawn tennis in Clonmel where the military officers stationed there were responsible for the diffusion of the game, though its growth was slow. However, the officers were principally spectators rather than participants. In north Tipperary local military officers were not part of the summer circle of lawn tennis parties associated with 'this aristocratic amusement.'[78] Name lists of those in attendance are included in lawn tennis reports. Analysis of these lists suggests that it was only those military officers who had received personal invitations who were present.[79]

Accounts of various sporting events with which the military were associated often refer to luncheons and dinner tables. In this regard, the evidence for Tipperary is similar to that noted for Limerick, where Tom Hayes found that 'eating, drinking and refreshments continued to be integral to the sporting experience'.[80] One of the most telling aspects of military participation and attendance at such meetings was that the officers were gravitating towards those people whom they identified as belonging to the same social class. Sport was once more a medium through which such associations were maintained and, in the case of country house games and recreations, it brought officers into the environment enhancing matrimonial prospects for the daughters of the home owners. Examples of matrimony between Tipperary ladies and military officers, as recorded in Burke's account of the landed gentry, demonstrate the importance of such associations. Archibald James Lamont, of Lamont, Argyll, formerly an officer in the army, married Adelaide Massy Dawson, Ballynacourte, Co. Tipperary, in

[77] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 27 March 1878.
[78] *Nenagh Guardian*, 14 Sept. 1878.
[79] *Nenagh Guardian*, 8 Sept. 1875; 9 Aug. 1879. *Clonmel Chronicle*, 1 Oct. 1879.
[80] Tom Hayes, 'God save the green, God save the Queen and the usual loyal toasts: sporting and dining for Ireland and/or the Queen' in Peter Gray (ed.) *Victoria's Ireland? Irishness and Britishness, 1837-1901*. (Dublin, 2004), p.

September 1839.[81] Similarly, Anna Lidwell, Dromard, Templemore, married Capt. W.J. Hoare, 7th Royal Fusiliers, in 1853.[82] Charles Morant, Brokenhurst, Hampshire, and late of the 11th Hussars married Malvina Elizabeth Hemphill, of Cashel.[83]

This section has looked at military officers attending as guests and participants in country house pursuits. Commanding officers at Templemore and Nenagh facilitated the growth of archery meetings by permitting these events to take place on parade grounds. Reciprocal invitations were then issued by the officers to country estates where archery and other lawn games took place. Conviviality and recreation intertwined on these occasions, which afforded military officers opportunities to interact with county families in the same way as has already been observed with regard to horse racing. Essentially, the nucleus of people involved regularly numbered less than two hundred, while, typically, many of the same family names recurred at the various recreational events.[84] That this was so indicates that these people moved in the same social circle and that the critical mass of individuals who promoted such activities was quiet small when compared to the size of the local communities. At a joint meeting of the Kilcommon Archers and South Tipperary Bowmen 'about two hundred and fifty persons were present' with officers from various regiments amongst those recorded as being in attendance.[85] Though military numbers and those of the leading families in the county were but a fraction of the county's population, they were essentially the fraction that mattered. These were the people who shaped the sporting landscape of Tipperary in the recreational activities outlined above.

[81] Sir Bernard Burke. *A genealogical and heraldic history of the landed gentry of Ireland*. Volume II (London, 1904), p. 924.
[82] Burke. *The landed gentry of Ireland*, p. 966.
[83] Burke. *The landed gentry of Ireland*, p. 1123.
[84] Lists of names included with archery reports permit some form of quantification. 190 names were mentioned in the report of the Kilcommon Archers (Cahir) meet, in August 1861. *Clonmel Chronicle*, 31 August 1861. 108 people were recorded at a meeting of the South Tipperary Bowmen, in June 1863. *Clonmel Chronicle*, 20 June 1863.
[85] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 31 August 1861.

The Military and Football

This section looks at the role of the military in the growth and development of rugby football in Tipperary. As a body of men, many in the military interacted with the communities in which they were stationed. Football was another sporting recreation through which the military – both officers and men – were able to continue this integration. This section looks at their participation and the extent to which they were actively involved.

The evidence from the press reports suggest that it was not only the officers who had the opportunity to participate in sport. In the 1870s, with the growth of athletics across the county, and indeed throughout Ireland, military officers were also prominent in organising meetings. Events inclusive of running, leaping and feats of skill typically involved various members of a military regiment right down to the private. A similar claim may also be made for football. Sporting challenges were a common feature of military life, especially, as Mason and Riedi note, in 'those far flung parts of the Empire where soldiers had a lot of time which was hard to fill'.[86]

Rugby was a new football code, and the military were to the fore in spreading it. When reports of rugby union started to appear in the Tipperary press they featured play between the military and local teams. It is almost certain that military officers introduced rugby football to Nenagh. On 27 December 1875, expressions of thanks were made to the commanding officer of the 50th (Queen's Own) Regiment 'for the kind manner in which he threw open both barracks and field to the townspeople of Nenagh with the rules of rugby union, which Lieut. Carr took great trouble to explain to the Nenagh men, it being their first attempt at the

[86] Mason and Riedi, *Sport and the military*, p. 7.

game.'[87] Reminiscent of the 79th Highlanders before them, the departure of the 50th Regiment from Nenagh was also lamented in the *Nenagh Guardian*, where it was remarked that 'no corps ever left the town more deservedly regretted, as a most cordial relationship existed since the football matches of last season, and the courtesy of the officers on these occasions…made them well worthy of the compliment paid them yesterday on their departure.'[88] Not all football games in which the military participated were reported in the local press. However, the surviving records of the Kilruane Football Club for the period 1876 to 1880 indicate that matches were played against the 53rd Regiment.[89] Moreover, the 53rd Regiment played rugby in Tipperary town against both the Clanwilliam club and the local grammar school in 1879.

It may be confidently stated that the military as a whole greatly contributed to the growth and development of rugby in Tipperary. Their participation in these sports led to emulation among the civilian community. It is likely that the military introduced association football to south Tipperary in 1879. A report in the local press noted the features of the 'association game' when describing a match between two military teams at Cahir barracks.[90] Similar to other activities, the military played a key role in the promotion of ball games. It is argued here that this was more by way of a dissemination process rather than one calculated to be injurious to any sporting recreation extant in the various local communities at the time. That they did so with the compliance, cooperation and participation of local residents suggests that there was local support and a local appetite for these new sporting pursuits.

[87] *Nenagh Guardian*, 29 Dec. 1875.
[88] *Nenagh Guardian*, 10 June 1876.
[89] National Library of Ireland Ms. 9515. Account book and records of Kilruane Football Club 1876-1880.
[90] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 26 Nov. 1879

Discussion

There is no doubt that many military personnel were instrumental in the introduction and dissemination of sport in Tipperary in the years between 1840 and 1880. Specifically, they introduced rugby union and association football while they were leading figures in the promotion of cricket, both in terms of playing the game and providing grounds on which to play. The military, especially the officers, came to know their social equals in Tipperary, and they quickly integrated. This sociability was a key component in the relations between the military and the communities in which they were stationed. When the South Tipperary bowmen met at Marlfield, in late July 1868, appended to the list of those in attendance, including the military personnel, was a note stating that 'all officers are considered honorary members of the club'.[91]

The evidence also indicates that some regiments and some individuals were more active, in sporting terms, than others. When the 7th Queen's Own Hussars were garrisoned in Cahir and Fethard in 1879, reports of their activities while engaged in football, cricket, horse racing or on the hunting circuit with their harrier pack, regularly appeared in the Tipperary press, principally in the *Clonmel Chronicle*. Indeed, the activities of the harrier pack appeared regularly with a list of landowners from Cahir and its hinterland on whose land they were permitted to hunt. In the various press reports, one name is common to these four recreational sports, Thomas Hone, a former pupil of Rugby school and a member of the Hone family renowned for their role in the early development of Irish cricket.[92] A regular on the Hussars cricket team, he rode his horse *Walmer* to victory in the Tally-Ho Challenge Cup at the Hussars steeplechases in 1880.[93] He also appeared in angling reports during the salmon

[91] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 8 August 1868.
[92] Hone, *Cricket in Ireland*, p. 34.
[93] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 3 Apr. 1880.

fishing season. In August 1886, the then Capt. Thomas Hone, 7th Hussars, was part of the Hurlingham Polo Club, which competed against the Westchester Polo Club, in Newport, Rhode Island.[94] While Hone was active in various sports, this activity was exceptional. The degree to which he participated was not reflective of the military as a whole, let alone in Tipperary. What Hone does represent, though, is the enthusiasm of the officer ranks to be sportingly active in the communities in which they were stationed. It was as if there was a sporting evangelism associated with their posting. The military were a critical link between the successful development of codified sport in Tipperary and its British inspiration. Sport was practised and promoted primarily through the landed gentry with whom the military officers easily associated. The military were maintaining links, sporting and social, which helped keep the Empire, as they saw it, together. These links would later see military officers prominent in the emergence of polo (at Cahir barracks, in 1887)[95] and golf (at Templemore barracks, in 1890)[96].

The evidence for Tipperary is similar to that for Westmeath, with military officers widely involved in many sports, specifically cricket and hunting to hounds, demonstrating a common sporting purpose between the military and the elite civilian populations in both counties. However, Neil Tranter has found that military patronage of organised sport in central Scotland was at a lower level than that found in Ireland. Officers of the Stirling garrison supported the 1868 Strathallan Games and army officers also donated eighteen per cent of prizes given by men in public service.[97] However, officers in Scotland did not support sport to the same extent as their counterparts in Ireland.

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[94] Laffaye, Horace A. *Polo in the United States: a history*. (Jefferson, North Carolina), 2011 pp 20-2. *Polo: Players Edition*, Vol. 15, No. 4, December 2011, p. 63.
[95] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 13 August 1887.
[96] *Nenagh Guardian*, 10 Sept. 1890.
[97] Tranter. 'The patronage of organised sport,' pp 230, 235.

In India, when the 'European soldiers played cricket on the northern end of the Esplanade, with bats and ball imported from England....They soon found their imitators. Parsi boys were playing cricket here as early as the 1830s.'[98] In Tipperary, the local people were exposed to the games of the Empire by the military, either directly, by playing with or against them, or indirectly as in India, by observing the military at play. An imprint of the various sports on the native psyche was being established. In spite of later protestations from the Roman Catholic hierarchy and nationalist supporters, the games of the military were, by and large, here to stay.[99] A similar claim could be made for the teams at Carrick-on-Suir and Kilcash copying garrison teams. This interaction with communities fostered playing football as a recreational activity.

When the officers promoted recreational sport at a barracks, whether it was archery, cricket or athletics, great attention to detail was the norm. Permission was sought from commanding officers to have a regimental band perform. On occasion, the day concluded with a festive ball, which was held in the garrison and on the whole, a great rapport developed between the landed and professional people from the surrounding town and hinterland. These activities helped to cement the positive relationship which officers had with a proportion, albeit minor, of the local population. But the commanding officers also granted permission to the non-commissioned officers and privates to play in sports of their own, notably football. In this respect the dissemination of sport outwards in the various local communities are examples of military related activity with other social classes.

[98] Ramachandra Guha. *A corner of a foreign field: the Indian history of a British* sport. (London, 2002) p. 13.
[99] See Mark Tierney. *Croke of Cashel: the life of Archbishop Thomas William Croke, 1823-1902*. (Dublin, 1976), p. 195.

What this study emphatically demonstrates is that military officers were active in recreational sport in Tipperary from the 1840s. If Mason and Riedi can 'emphasise the sheer quantity of sport in the British military between the 1880s and 1960,'[100] then this study shows that it was not something which suddenly started in 1880. It was a process which commenced almost as soon as a regiment arrived in town and a cricket pitch was laid, a horse race was arranged, or a ball court was erected. The evidence from Tipperary shows that all these components were quickly put in place and sport soon became a vibrant aspect of the military presence in the county. It was a presence which greatly assisted the growth and development of recreational sport in Tipperary between 1840 and 1880.

Yet, military participation at various sports in Tipperary cannot be viewed in isolation. The participation of officers has to be seen as part of a growing movement among the upper and middle classes for the advancement of those sports and recreations, which were of interest to them, and which acted as a means of facilitating and maintaining social contacts. The military greatly assisted in facilitating the continuance of sports, such as hunting to hounds, horse racing, archery, rugby football, cricket and athletics. They could make use of local farmland for hunting to hounds and horse racing while accommodating other field sports within the barracks. Many in the military, especially the officers, lived active lives in the locality to which they were posted and were an important, if not central, part of local social and sporting life. The officers had a symbiotic relationship with their Tipperary social equals. It was a relationship which greatly assisted the sporting environment of Tipperary in the nineteenth century.

[100] Mason and Riedi. *Sport and the military*, p. 253.

Chapter 2: Country House Sport

Introduction

This chapter investigates the recreational sports which were popular among families who resided in a country house or estate.[1] The term country house is used to denote the primary residence of people who were of independent means. They were professional men or land owners who had the financial resources to invite friends and associates to their home to play some form of sport. Sports played were archery, croquet, lawn tennis or cricket, all essentially lawn games. Cricket required more space but it too had a defined perimeter. Yachting, in the north-west of the county, is also assessed. Yachting was closely associated with the residents of houses and estates which were on the foreshore of Lough Derg. Though hunting to hounds and horse racing often took place within estate confines these are treated in separate chapters.

The relevance of this chapter to the thesis is that it comprehensively demonstrates that it was within the estate setting that sport became established. It was promoted by the owners and residents of estates and demesnes for their own enjoyment. For many, it was important that what they did on their estates mirrored what was happening within estate settings in Great Britain. Without patronage and access to estate land and parkland, sport would not have occurred in Tipperary on the scale that it did. The impetus would not have come from any other source and this was critical to its evolution and growth.

[1] As has been pointed out by Terence Dooley the terms country house and big house were interchangeable when houses were being described. For the purposes of this thesis, the term 'country house' is used for the period under review. Terence Dooley. *The decline of the big house in Ireland* (Dublin, 2001), p. 9. See also chapter 1 of Dooley's work and endnote 1, p. 293. The term 'big house' has also been used in an exposition of archery. Brian Griffin. 'The big house at play: archery as an elite pursuit from the 1830s to the 1870s,' in Ciaran O'Neill (ed.) *Irish elites in the nineteenth century* (Dublin, 2013), pp 153-171.

Willie Nolan compiled a distribution map of three hundred and forty-four country houses in Co. Tipperary, based on a minimum Griffith valuation of £10. This map clearly identified the spread of these house types during the time frame of this thesis (see Figure 4).[2] Unlike the work of Terence Dooley, this study does not set out to investigate the size of the house or estate associated with it. The country house setting was central to the evolution of sport in Tipperary and, due to the thoroughness of Nolan's research, this chapter uses the criteria identified by him as a basis for assessing the level or sporting activity at these locations. These houses and estates were the *de facto* arenas for recreational sport in Tipperary and this chapter demonstrates the degree to which this was so. Nolan's map also ties in with the documentary evidence for sport on these estates. In some parts of the west and south-west of the county no houses were identified by Nolan. This was also reflected in the absence of lawn games in these areas as much of this land was five hundred feet, or higher, above sea level.

Another map by T. Jones Hughes (Figure 5) shows the distribution pattern of dwelling houses of the dispersed rural population, valued at under £1, around 1850.[3] In the west of the county there was a concentration of such houses specifically where there was no recorded evidence of elite sporting recreation. This does not demonstrate that the people resident here did not have recourse to sporting recreation but, rather, they have left no documentary evidence in the local press of their deeds. Consequently, it was within the estate and demesne setting where sport left its imprint and the evidence presented here confirms this thesis.

[2] William Nolan. 'Patterns of living in county Tipperary from 1770 to 1850' in William Nolan (ed.) *Tipperary history and society* (Dublin, 1985), pp 295, 302.
[3] Jones Hughes. 'Landholding and settlement,' p. 354.

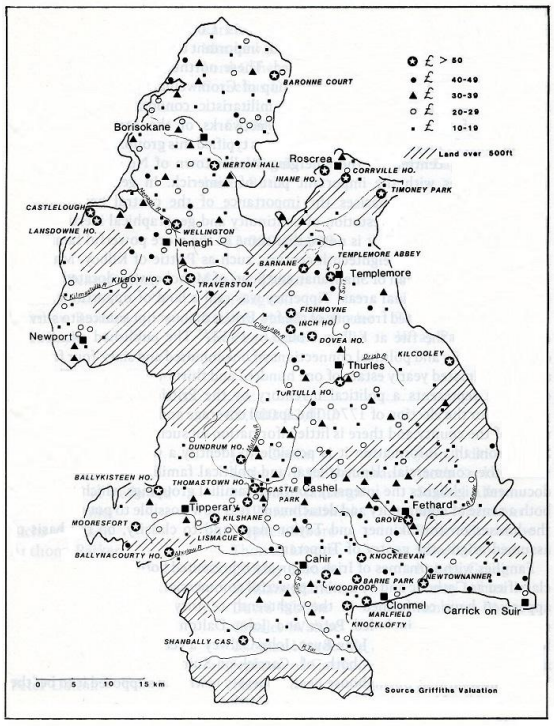

Figure 4: Country houses in county Tipperary with a minimum valuation of £10, circ. 1850 (Source: William Nolan)

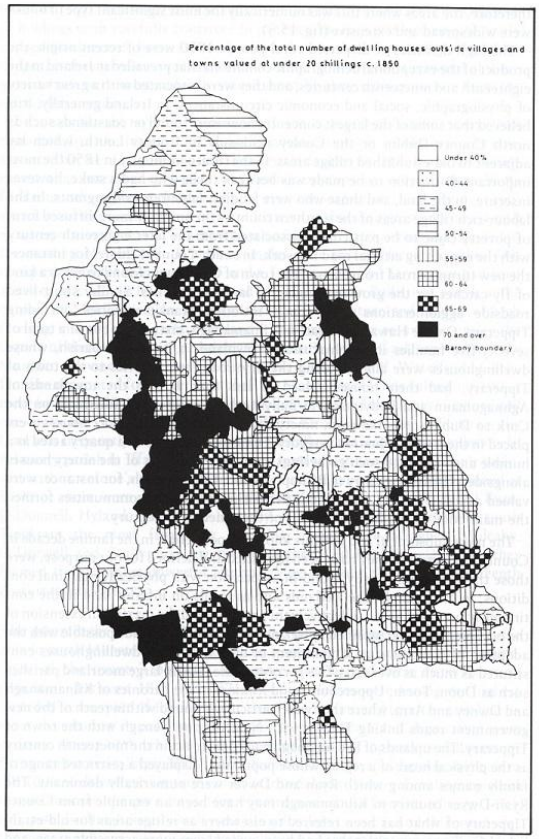

Figure 5: Dwelling houses of the dispersed rural population valued at under £1, circ 1850 (Source: T. Jones Hughes)

Unlike the large cities of Ireland and Great Britain, where issues of crowd control were central to law and order, such a situation did not arise in Tipperary. The population was primarily rural based. The control element, in a sporting context, was one of access to exclusive areas of play. One was invited to attend. There was no room for the ordinary man in these settings. Similar to England, the houses and the estate grounds in which they were situated 'were themselves important elements in the visual projection of aristocratic pomp and power'.[4]

Of the three hundred and forty-four houses recorded by Nolan, thirty-three had a valuation above £50, of which Marlfield, Knocklofty, Shanbally Castle, Knockeevan, Barne Park, Woodroof and Grove, all in the south of county, were noted as meeting places for various recreational activities, including hunting to hounds, archery and cricket.[5] The press reports demonstrated that not every house or estate was associated with the sporting evolution which took place in Tipperary. Samuel Murray Going was vice-president of the Thurles cricket club and he resided at Liskeveen House, which was seven miles from the town.[6] Both he and his daughters attended cricket matches associated with the club.[7] Yet there were no press reports to indicate if his house or lands were ever used for sporting purposes. This demonstrates that there were houses and estates which were active as arenas for sport, while there were other locations which were not used. This is a trend which continues through the time-frame of this study. The level of sport fluctuated at specific locations, principally on account of what was fashionable at any given time.

[4] David Underdown. *Start of play: cricket and culture in eighteenth-century England* (London, 2000), p. 47.
[5] Nolan. 'Patterns of living,' p. 302.
[6] *Nenagh Guardian*, 2 Apr. 1873. John Lawrence. *Handbook of cricket in Ireland 1873-74* (Dublin, 1874), p. 151. Going had an estate of 2,522 acres in 1878. Hussey de Burgh. *The landowners of Ireland*, p. 195.
[7] *Cashel Gazette*, 5 Aug. 1871; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 6 July 1872.

The principal focus of this chapter is to emphatically demonstrate that the development of sport in Tipperary was different to sport which took place in an urban context. Country houses and estates were effectively the venues for sport from 1840 right through to 1880. This related to the involvement of the residents of these houses, and their associates, in sporting recreation on private lands. It was the sporting pursuits that took place within the safe confines of the estate wall or on the rivers, lakes and countryside, which is the subject of this analysis. The coming together of people for sport was one part of wider social networking. Music recitals and balls were occasions which also brought these families together. It is clear that this important phase in the evolution of sport occurred on private land, beyond the gaze of potential critics.[8] The houses were hidden behind parkland and demesne walls, emphasising the divide between the residents and the wider community outside of these private enclaves.[9] So the question remains, if sport took place among a privileged section of society in a private setting, how did it diffuse among the wider community? This chapter answers this question in the context of Tipperary sport.

Crucially, in the whole context of this thesis, the country house setting was the only arena which provided women an opportunity to participate in sport, especially archery, croquet and lawn tennis. Another important factor was that it brought female members of families into regular contact with each other and allowed them meet prospective husbands. Country house sport gave single women the opportunity to meet at varied locations, play sport and, hidden behind the estate wall, perform a role which was not afforded to them in a public setting. Sport in the mid-nineteenth century was a masculine preserve.[10]

[8] Neil Tranter. *Sport, economy and society in Britain 1750-1914* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 5.
[9] Dooley, *The decline of the big house*, p. 18.
[10] See chapter five 'Women and the masculine kingdom of sport' in Tony Collins. *Sport in capitalist society* (London, 2013), pp 38-47.

The importance of these elements adds to the existing knowledge of how pre-codified sport developed in Ireland. Apart from horse racing, as is shown in Chapter Four, no other sport had a regulatory body. While the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) were the law makers of cricket, such was the parochial nature of the game in Tipperary that any disputes were resolved locally, as there was no administrative cricket body in Victorian Ireland. The landed estate setting provided the backdrop for all team and individual sports, apart from hurling, variations of folk football and athletics. It was the estate setting, allied to the role of the military and their parade grounds, which were the principal instigators of sport in rural Tipperary. This was sport in its infancy, pre-codification.

Cricket

This section chronicles the degree to which cricket played an important social and cultural role amongst those who resided in country homes. Though cricket is examined further in Chapter Six, the analysis here explores the degree to which the country house facilitated the game and how its supporters used it as a means to entertain their friends and peers. It also provided an occasion for women to meet and socialise.

In its formative years, as a recreational sport in Tipperary, cricket was a game played by urban, rural and military teams, drawn from the middle and upper classes. The game had a stop-start introduction in the county, as is demonstrated in Chapter Six, with the earliest reference to it coming from Carrick-on-Suir in 1834, when Henry Mandeville 'granted the use of his field to the members' of the town club.[11] Cricket at this time was still something of a novelty in Ireland. It was a rare example, in an Irish context, of a team sport which had a defined set of laws, the oldest extant laws surviving from 1744, as previously noted. Also in

[11] *Tipperary Free Press*, 4 June 1834.

existence are ‘articles of agreement’ drawn up for a match between two teams which took place in 1727.[12]

From 1840 to 1864 there were occasions when it seemed that cricket was not going to appeal to the wider male population in the county. Through the paternal support of some of the influential land owners, such as John Bagwell, who allowed teams the opportunity to play on his ‘spacious demesne,’ it appeared that the game would enjoy wide popularity.[13] Several of the early matches in Tipperary involved a military team. As the knowledge of the laws of cricket became known, the game started to expand. It soon became a sport which featured within the confines of the estate grounds, one which facilitated the associational culture between like minded individuals within a community. One of the principal reasons for this was the provision of playing grounds. Unlike hurling, which many owners did not allow on their lands, cricket clubs, some formal and some less so, benefitted from the patronage of benevolent landowners. Cricket did not need to restrict itself to commonage lands, as hurling had to. This resulted in some cricket teams incorporating the name of the local townland or estate in which the team was based into the club name. Names such as the Priory CC, Sopwell Hall XI, and Beechwood Park XI took the name of the estate from which the team was drawn.[14] In effect a patronage shift had occurred with these two field sports. Though landlord patronage was evident for the promotion of hurling, in the eighteenth century, much of it for gambling purposes, this support ceased in the aftermath of the 1798 uprising and also the Peninsular Wars. Land agitation in the pre-Famine period, which featured bands of men often referred to as hurlers, only served to alienate the sport from potential patrons and supporters. Cricket filled the void left when the patronage of hurling declined.

[12] Wynne-Thomas. *The history of cricket*, pp 7-8. Tranter. *Sport, economy and society*, p. 14.
[13] *Tipperary Free Press*, 6 June 1849. *Clonmel Chronicle*, 1 June 1850.
[14] *Tipperary Advocate*, 20 Sept. 186/2; *Nenagh Guardian*, 30 Aug. 1873.

In 1846, in Durrow, Co. Laois, the Ashbrook Union Cricket Club played on the local estate, which was at the centre of this small town. The estate owner, Viscount Ashbrook, was president of the club. He also opened the batting on the occasions when he played for his team, whether it was in practice matches or in fixtures against a visiting eleven.[15] The score book of 1847 reveals how carefully organised the club was. At this time the club was structured with a defined set of rules and regulations. This demonstrates that a fledgling sporting economy had begun, even at this early date. Rule number one noted that each member was to pay £1 per annum subscription. Rule number three related to expenses for practice matches, for which each member of the losing team was to pay one shilling towards 'the ground fund of the club.' Lunches were available for 1*s* 6*d* on practice days. Rule number four stipulated that for matches against other clubs, each member selected to play had to pay five shillings per match, in addition to his annual subscription. Rule number five recorded the names of five men chosen as players of the club who were to receive two shillings for practice days and the same per day for matches against other clubs and their expenses.[16] Here was evidence of early professionalism in a sporting context at the height of the Great Famine in Ireland. While gentlemen paid to play cricket, rule number five clearly shows that estate workers were paid, demonstrating a desire to field a strong team. It also provided very good employment for the men chosen to play. By extension one may infer that similar club rules existed among some of the country house teams in Tipperary.

However, cricket still remained a social occasion. Luncheons and dinners were important social aspects of the sporting experience. The match day was as important as a social event, as it was for the sport it provided. If a land owner was not an active participant in the game itself the placing of land at the disposal of a team brought people into his circle. The Bagwell

[15] Ashbrook Union cricket club score book 1846-1849, match dates 24 July 1847; 31 July 1847; 26 Aug. 1847.
[16] Ashbrook Union cricket club score book 1846-1849, 'Rules and Regulations for the season 1847,' n.p.

estate at Marlfield was a popular location for such matches. There is no indication that clubs were charged by Bagwell to play on his demesne. Rather, it was 'through the liberality of the Hon. Member for Clonmel, [that] the handsome demesne of Marlfield [was] freely given to the members of the Clonmel cricket club.'[17] Neither was it a token gesture, as on occasion 'the grounds were thrown open to all.'[18] John Bagwell, the elected MP for the Clonmel borough constituency, opened up his estate to various clubs for recreational sport, of which cricket was the most popular. Yet, while Bagwell's largesse may be considered as patronage, it was not altogether altruistic. The people invited onto his demesne lands were often his voters, so it was to his own benefit to have them present. Prior to the general election of 1874 his popularity waned as he would not support Home Rule or the demand for a Catholic university, losing his seat by a large margin to A.J. Moore.[19] Bagwell, having a net estate of 3,519 acres, accrued much of his capital from business interests in Clonmel and income from rentals on his property within the town and its hinterland. This gave his property a valuation of £8,480 in 1876. Edward Armstrong, at Mealiffe, Thurles, in the middle of the county, had an estate of just over 6,000 acres in extent but it only had a valuation of £1,920. This demonstrated the wide gap in income, between rural and urban contexts, in what was essentially a rural based economy.[20] This gap also shows the dichotomy which existed with sport in Tipperary. It was no coincidence that sport flourished in those areas where both a capital based economy and urban growth was strong. This was apparent in the north-south divide of some sporting recreations. For the majority of the estate owners in Tipperary their primary income was derived from land. This dependence on rent from land was an essential

[17] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 29 June 1864; *Tipperary Free Press*, 21 Apr. 1871.
[18] *Tipperary Free Press*, 9 June 1865.
[19] Albert Barry, C.S.S.R. *The life of Count Moore* (Dublin, 1905), p. 11; William Hayes and Art Kavanagh. *The Tipperary gentry.* Vol.1 (Dublin, 2003), p. 24.
[20] *Return of owners of land*, p. 158.

feature of the landlord system in Ireland.[21] There were more affluent houses in the south of the county than in the north and this was reflected in sporting recreation.

Another contributory factor was that 'the northern baronies of Tipperary had far fewer large leaseholders than south Tipperary, where there was a substantial class of gentrified Catholic head tenants – many of whom built country houses indistinguishable from those of the landlord class.'[22] In 1850, in their place was a concentration of houses which had a valuation between £10 and £39, of which sixty-five of these were in Lower Ormond.[23] These were important socio-economic indicators of how the county functioned, how money was made, and how people were then able to support the staging of sporting events.

At Templemore, John Carden opened the batting for the local cricket club. Carden was a playing member of the Priory CC, where it was noted that 'after a short period under the admirable training of Sir John they would lick all before them!'[24] His house, called 'The Priory', was extensively renovated at a cost of £20,000, commencing in 1856 and completed in 1861.[25] He was an urban landlord, with rentals from the town of Templemore adding to his income. He had property totalling just over 6,680 acres, which had a valuation almost equivalent to that of John Bagwell, standing at £8,344 10s.[26] His property, unlike that of Bagwell, was primarily rural in nature.

[21] Mark Bence-Jones. *Twilight of the ascendancy* (reprint London, 1993), p. 19.
[22] Andrew Tierney. 'Architecture of gentility in nineteenth century Ireland.' in Ciaran O'Neill (ed.) *Irish elites in the nineteenth century*. (Dublin, 2013), p. 34. See also Thomas Power. *Land, politics and society in eighteenth century Tipperary* (Oxford, 1993), pp 113-14.
[23] Nolan. 'Patterns of living,' p. 302.
[24] *Tipperary Advocate*, 20 Sept. 1862.
[25] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 12 Oct. 1861. In 1875 the figure quoted for the improvements was 'about £40,000'. *Clonmel Chronicle*, 10 Feb. 1875.
[26] *Return of owners of land*, p. 159.

In September 1852, the meeting of military teams drawn from Clonmel and Waterford garrisons was looked forward to as 'the players were first-rate' and the attendance at Marlfield was 'very numerous and comprised the *elite* (sic) of our town, of its vicinity, and the surrounding districts.'[27] The critical input of the army personnel to the cricketing experience cannot be underestimated. Across all realms of sporting activity the officer class were often seen as the best exponents of any game and cricket was no different. They raised the standards. Yet the class distinction, which was common with cricket in England, was apparent in Clonmel at this time. As the players adjourned for lunch 'the gentlemen retired to the marquee ... there was a second tent, where the non-commissioned officers and privates, who assisted as players in the match' had their meal. As detailed reports of matches started to appear in the press not only was the scorecard given but also a list of names of those in attendance. These lists announced to one's peers and associates that they were keeping up with the latest fashion by supporting and attending cricket. Though cricket had been played at various locations in the county from 1834, it was not until 1864 that the game began to expand to rural locations countywide. This reached a peak level in 1876. To the fore in its promotion were the country houses of Tipperary as they facilitated clubs and their supporters.

Apart from the house setting itself, which provided the means for recreational sport to take place, the other important aspect was that they provided a means for cross fertilisation of ideas, discussions and considerations about all aspects of life and society including sport. As the 1860s commenced Ireland was a decade removed from the Famine. The period was one which was not without its troubles for landlords. Difficulties in maintaining a standard of living comparable to that which they enjoyed in the pre-Famine era meant that many families had to resort to the Landed Estates Court. Expenditure exceeded income for many families

[27] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 18 Sept. 1852.

and they could not sell land to pay off debts. With the introduction of Incumbered Estate Acts in 1848 and 1849 there was a mechanism put in place through which some families could free themselves from debt ridden lands.[28] Tipperary families were among those who resorted to the Incumbered and later Landed Estates Courts as they sought to extract themselves from such trouble. Between 18 May 1852 and 5 November 1857 nineteen Tipperary properties came before the Landed Estates Court, testament to the financial distress felt by many families unable to maintain their estates.[29] Of these, Noan House – sold in 1853 – featured in athletics, Garnavilla House – sold in 1857 – featured as a meeting point for hunting to hounds, and Rehill House – sold in 1857 – also featured as a hunt meeting point.[30]

Britain also settled into a period of relative peace in the aftermath of the war in the Crimea. The Crimean War had taken military personnel and the sons of some Tipperary families to the battle front. For the Empire, it was a war which concentrated attention, manpower and horses to Eastern Europe. British attention to matters in the Crimea created a window of opportunity for activists to once more consider insurrection in Ireland. According to British officials in America, 'Irish sympathisers, with the tacit approval of the United States government, had laid plans to infiltrate three hundred republican terrorists into Ireland' in an effort to create unrest and trouble while the military were concentrated on fighting the Russians in the Crimea.[31] That such a situation did not materialise does not detract from the reality that political unrest, arising from the British presence in Ireland, was never far from the surface. The 1867 attempt to destabilise the government was indicative of the level of

[28] Mary Cecelia Lyons, *Illustrated incumbered estates* (Whitegate, 1993), p. xiii.
[29] Lyons, *Incumbered estates*, p. xlvi.
[30] Lyons, *Incumbered estates*, pp49, 69-76.
[31] R.V. Comerford. *The Fenians in context: Irish politics & society 1848-82* (reprint Dublin, 1998), pp 33-4. Trevor Royle. *Crimea: the great Crimean war 1854-1856* (London, 1999), p. 386.

agitation which Fenian activists could use in their subversion of British rule in Ireland. Foremost amongst them was John Mitchel, who had a distinct 'hatred of all things British.'[32]

In Tipperary, troops from Clonmel garrison headed to the Crimean battle front in late 1854.[33] Captain Morton, from that barracks, had to embark for the Crimea as soon as the 6th Dragoon Guards (Carbineers) received orders to head to the East.[34] Not only that, recruitment was once more on the agenda as 'on average, 100 [men] a week enlisted in Clonmel.'[35] At the end of the war in 1856, festivities were held in Templemore to honour the successful return of Major Carden and Captain Willington after they were 'exposed to all the dangers and sufferings of the entire campaign of the Crimea'.[36]

With the war over, life returned to normal for many people. In peacetime England, meetings were held to establish a governing body for football. The Football Association was subsequently established in 1863. The following year, in Clonmel, it was noted that another amusement was 'added to those already enjoyed by our local aristocracy. That year a cricket club was started with Samuel Perry, Esq., J.P. [Justice of the Peace], Woodroofe, the hon. Secretary.'[37] The fact that there had been a previous club in the town bearing the same name mattered little. In this instance, it was the 'local aristocracy' which gave the new club their imprimatur. This club was an example of a broadening awareness of recreational sport which could take place within the confines of the estate wall.

[32] Comerford. *The Fenians in context*, p. 37.
[33] *Tipperary Free Press*, 15 Nov. 1854.
[34] *Tipperary Free Press*, 2 June 1855.
[35] *Tipperary Free Press*, 9 Jan. 1855.
[36] *Tipperary Free Press*, 7 Oct 1856.
[37] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 14 May 1864.

By 1865, there were several recreational amusements available to the gentlemen and ladies of Great Britain and Ireland. Of these, archery was the one which set in motion an interest in recreational activity in a country house context. Croquet and lawn tennis followed as recreational activities which were enjoyed in the relative comfort of the demesne setting. These recreations also provided the opportunity for social discourse, lavish luncheons, band music and dancing. Though some gentlemen may have felt that summer got in the way of the hunting season, summer gave both sexes an opportunity to dress extravagantly and attend to that most important aspect of one's early life, finding a husband or wife.[38] This was a new twist on the season of social events. While the Georgians had favoured tea drinking and sedate dancing, the Victorians were altogether more vigorous in their pastimes. Sport gave them the opportunity to watch and admire future partners. In May 1851, when the military and civilian cricket teams met at Marlfield, Clonmel, the lawn was 'graced by numbers of ladies in carriages'.[39] Occasions such as these further emphasised the social circle associated with sport where the dinners and dances, which punctuated the day, allowed for great interaction between different families and military personnel.

At the Trant estate at Dovea, Thurles, a cricket team bearing the townland name competed against the Templemore garrison club in September 1865.[40] After play and dinner 'the spacious ballroom' of the Trant home was made available for dancing, with music provided by the Tipperary Light Infantry. Dancing and music added to the sporting experience. It was not something specific to cricket. It was an integral aspect of archery meetings. The new found fashion for cricket and archery also made some businessmen aware that they could enhance their turnovers by providing the necessary sporting equipment. From a Tipperary

[38]Reference to summer and hunting by J.P. Mahaffy as quoted in Dooley, *The decline of the big house*, p. 56.
[39] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 31 May 1851.
[40] *Nenagh Guardian*, 9 Sept. 1865.

perspective the earliest businessman to advertise as a 'cricketing outfitter' who could also supply 'articles connected with ... other British sports,' was John Wisden, Leicester Square, London. His advertisements appeared in the Tipperary press from May 1860.[41]

Mail order was a standard means of acquiring goods, of which the best were procured from London. By this time, archery was established as a fashionable recreation in the south of the county. The equipment necessary was delivered by mail order. The postal service gave many country families an opportunity to emulate their peers, neighbours and associates. It was not until 1866, that a Nenagh businessman advertised his wares in the local press. J.D. Harkness, a gunsmith by profession, stocked cricket, archery and angling supplies to accompany the gun wares which he had also 'on hands to meet the requirements of his numerous customers'.[42] All factors for the growth and development of sporting recreation were now in place. The local gentry had the capital to invest in these goods, they had the grounds on which to play, and local businessmen had the goods on stock or they could be acquired by mail order.

Lastly, for sport to take place, owners of country houses had a great interest in recreational activity and the time to afford to it. These were two key elements which were essential for any particular sport to flourish. This interest prompted Edward Bayly to establish a cricket club in Dundrum in 1866.[43] John Bayly was a key member of the club, but his duties as an officer in the Royal Navy ensured that he was often absent.[44] The club continued to blossom. At the start of 1870 it had 'a pavilion erected capable of accommodating sixty persons at

[41] *Nenagh Guardian*, 2 May 1860.
[42] *Nenagh Guardian*, 6 June 1866.
[43] *Cashel Gazette*, 23 June 1866.g
[44] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 28 July 1866.

dinner.'[45] However, by 1876, the end had come for the club at a time when cricket was at the height of its popularity in the county. Commander John Bayly departed Dundrum in 1876 and with no member willing to maintain the 'crease and cricket implements in serviceable condition...the pavilion and implements were sold by auction.'[46] This example demonstrates the tenuous bonds of sport and its advocates at this time. The club survived while there was patronage and someone willing to give it direction but once this person departed the very existence of the club was undermined and it folded.

Similarly in north Tipperary, the D'Alton brothers, Charles, St. Eloy and John, were all integral members of the Ormond CC and also the Claremont XI, which was based on their home lands. All three gentlemen and their families emigrated to Australia and when they did, it brought to a close a cricketing association with Claremont which had commenced in 1864.[47] It was a scene all too familiar with other aspects of sport in the country house, as interest in a specific recreation came and went in accordance with what was fashionable at any given time. It also indicated that specific individuals or families were not fixed features on the landscape.

The gentlemen cricket eleven made its first appearance on the Tipperary sporting calendar in 1862.[48] Gentlemen's eleven teams were a feature of the cricketing experience in the county for the remainder of the period of this study, with the mid-1870s popular years for contests of this nature. In August 1869, Henry Munster, a parliamentary candidate for the Cashel borough and an able cricketer in his own right, brought his own eleven together to compete against Rockwell College 'on the beautiful demesne of William Murphy Esq., of

[45] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 26 Feb. 1870.
[46] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 19 July 1876.
[47] *Nenagh Guardian*, 17 Aug. 1864
[48] *Nenagh Guardian*, 9 Aug. 1862.

Ballinamona.'[49] After the match, class distinctions were reinforced as Murphy 'hospitably entertained a numerous and respectable company of visitors, while there was an ample *spread* (*sic*) for the players and all comers upon the grass, provided by Mr. Munster.' Munster attempted to gain election to parliament on the Cashel borough ticket and was keen to buy as much support as was within his means. Yet cricket paradoxically was the one sport which brought in all classes to the same sporting arena, no matter how divided they were politically and socially. Cricket was unique among all sports in Victorian Tipperary. While other sports such as archery, croquet and lawn tennis were class specific, cricket evolved differently. Men were paid to bowl and bat at cricket, while typically the man who organised the team opened the batting or felt comfortable coming in after the fall of a few wickets. Bowling was not for him. Cricket was exceptional in this respect because of its inbuilt use of players from different classes. It would not over-stretch the limits of reason to state that it was the most democratic of all games.

The 'informal yet tightly knit social networks [which] were central to British middle-class male culture' were also found in rural Tipperary.[50] It was not unusual for gentlemen's elevens to appear bearing the name of a man associated with another sporting diversion. A team of eleven gentlemen was another conduit to maintain social networks and keep up to date with the latest gossip, as well as just whiling away the hours in recreational activity. Two men well known in the hunting field in the west of the county, Cooper Chadwick and Walter Ryan, put out two such teams in a match against each other in 1873. Mrs. Ryan 'sumptuously entertained' both teams on the conclusion of the match.[51] Occasions such as this helped to reinforce a sense of community as the social networks were replicated across different games.

[49] *Cashel Gazette*, 21 Aug. 1869.
[50] Collins, *Sport in capitalist society*, p. 81.
[51] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 16 Aug. 1873.

This section has explored examples of the way in which the country house facilitated cricket, especially in its capacity of providing grounds for new clubs and the gentlemen elevens. While cricket was a means of bringing people together, it was also another conduit through which social networks were maintained. Cricket provided the 'gentler sex' the opportunity to meet.[52] Cricket came to the fore in 1864 and the country estate was a facilitator of matches. These matches brought together the social elites who reciprocated the welcome afforded to them by hosting similar events. This was a typical feature associated with the game. Though cricket provided a convivial setting for such gatherings, it was not the first country house sport or recreation to fulfil this function. Hunt meetings regularly commenced with breakfast at one house or another, before the hunt party moved off. Archery was the stimulus for subsequent sporting events to take place in a country house setting. It is the next facet of country house sport which is investigated.

Archery

This section explores the degree to which archery became a common recreation at country houses and estates in Tipperary. It was a more exclusive recreation than cricket. Archery provided the first real opportunity for female participation in sport to a degree which was not previously seen in the county.

Archery became fashionable in Great Britain in the latter end of the eighteenth century as it was a means 'to flaunt one's wealth and pass the large amount of time the leisured class had on its hands'.[53] A brief reference to archery, in conjunction with a pigeon shooting fete at the home of John Power near Carrick-on-Suir in July 1844, does not constitute evidence that

[52] The term 'gentle sex' or the 'fair sex' was widely used in reports and accounts of matches.
[53] Martin Johnes, 'Archery, romance and elite culture in England and Wales, *c*.1780-1840' in *History*. Vol. 89 (2004), p. 197.

archery was widely practiced at that time. [54] Though this recreational sport was popular in England and Wales from the 1780s, it did not become a fashionable pursuit in Tipperary until 1858 when a regular pattern of archery target shooting became established.[55] This was twenty-five years after the Meath Archers were founded in Co. Meath.[56] The same may also be said of other archery societies throughout Ireland. It is likely that much archery went unrecorded as there was no reason to report it in the local press because it took place in a private setting. It was in the late 1850s and early 1860s that archery meetings became widely reported from locations throughout the country. This was a reflection of its increased popularity.[57]

In Tipperary, as elsewhere, archery was an easily administered recreational activity. Once it took hold among the residents of the country estates, archery soon became another activity which was essential for any aspiring socialite to participate in. Bourgeois society in Tipperary took it to their hearts once the sport became fashionable. The 'Templemore Archers' (Templemore), the 'Ormond Archery Club' (Nenagh) and the 'Clanwilliam Archers' (Tipperary) were all established between 1858 and 1861.[58] Of thirty-two active clubs in the 1860s as identified by Brian Griffin, four of them were found in Tipperary (Figure 6).[59] Three further clubs have been identified in the course of the research for this thesis, giving Co. Tipperary a similar concentration of archery clubs in the 1860s, to that of Co. Cork, each having seven clubs.

[54] *Tipperary Free Press*, 13 July 1844.
[55] *Nenagh Guardian*, 12 May 1858; 5 June 1858; 7 Aug. 1858.
[56] Griffin, 'Archery as an elite pursuit,' p. 154.
[57] Griffin, 'Archery as an elite pursuit,' p. 164.
[58] *Nenagh Guardian*, 12 May 1858; 5 Mar. 1859; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 25 May 1861; 1 June 1861; 18 Sept. 1861.
[59] Griffin, 'Archery as an elite pursuit,' p. 164.

In 1861, a Clonmel businessman, S. Bradford, set about acquiring the necessary equipment to sell to an emerging niche market. He sold bows from twelve shillings. Youth bows were sold from two pence to six shillings and nine pence each.[60] Four foot targets were priced at eight shillings and six pence, six foot iron stands were six shillings and six pence, while a dozen arrows for ladies were priced at twenty shillings. Gentlemen had to pay twenty-four shillings for the same number. Equipment prices indicate that it was a sport that was not cheap to play.

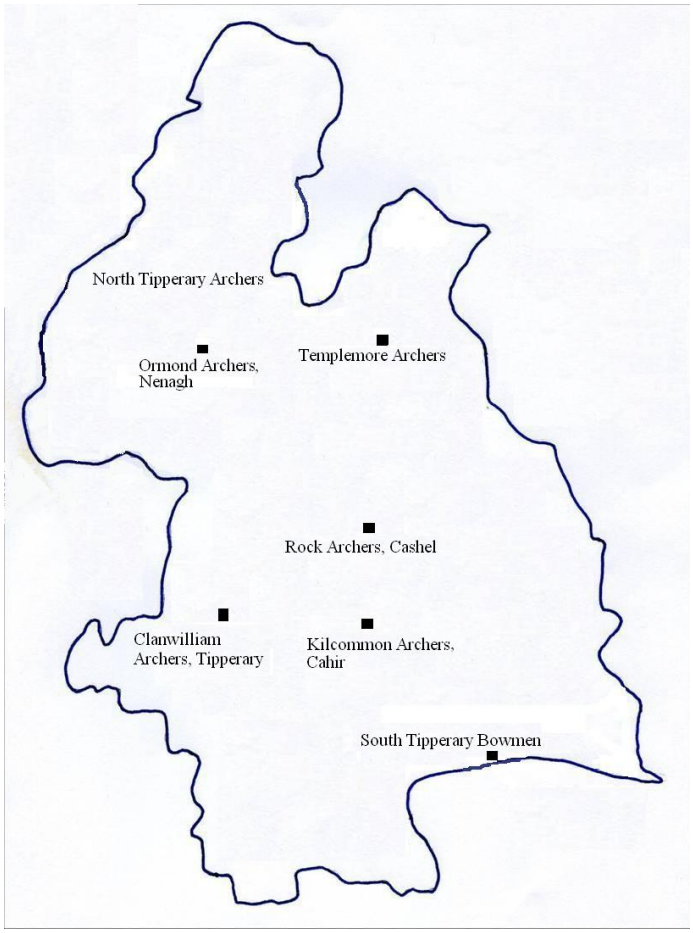

Figure 6: Archery clubs in Co. Tipperary, 1858-1868. (Note: a specific location for the North Tipperary Archers has not been identified)

In common with meetings in England and Wales, an archery meeting in Tipperary was not complete without a dinner and a ball.[61] In 1858, 'upwards of eighty persons' who participated

[60] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 25 May 1861, 3 July 1861.
[61] Johnes, 'Archery in England and Wales,' p. 196.

at a meeting of the Templemore Archers were treated to dinner by John Carden, at his estate at Barnane, after which 'an accession of visitors took place [and] dancing commenced.'[62] This number was dwarfed at a combined meet of the South Tipperary Bowmen and the Kilcommon Archers when 'about two hundred and fifty persons were present'.[63] This was a feature of all archery meetings around the county. But unlike meetings of toxophilites elsewhere in Ireland, it was probable that those attending for dinner in south Tipperary had to pay a surcharge.[64] In July 1861, at the 'first prize meeting' of the year for the South Tipperary Bowmen, participants were requested to forward a charge of two shillings and six pence to the secretary prior to the meeting.[65] This enabled the Bowmen to pay Miss Wade of Clonmel, the principal caterer for the society between 1861 and 1871, ensuing that dinners were served to members at various locations where the club met, including Knockeevan, Marlfield, Cahir and Knocklofty.[66] The club was not remiss in thanking and praising her for the service she provided. Through the medium of the local press, especially the *Clonmel Chronicle*, not only did correspondents glowingly recount the deeds of the various archery clubs but they used it to note the 'excellent repast' provided by Miss Wade.[67] On occasion she was assisted by her brothers David or William.[68]

Where meals were served on country house grounds a 'dining pavilion was erected and close to it a large tent, both supplied by P.J. Hynes, Blackhall-place, Dublin, together with the marquee which was placed close to the shooting ground.'[69] The Hynes family appear to have carved out a niche market for themselves in this respect as they also supplied 'a spacious and

[62] *Nenagh Guardian*, 9 Oct. 1858.
[63] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 31 Aug. 1861.
[64] Toxophilite is a noun to denote a student or lover of archery.
[65] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 3 July 1861.
[66] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 13 July 1861; 17 Aug. 1861. *Nenagh Guardian*, 31 Aug. 1861; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 30 July 1862.
[67] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 15 Aug. 1862; 28 Aug. 1866.
[68] *Nenagh Guardian*, 3 Aug. 1861; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 20 June 1863.
[69] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 12 Sept. 1863; 3 Sept. 1864.

beautiful tent' for a meeting of the Wexford Archers in 1850.[70] Hynes also took out an advertisement in the *Freeman's Journal* informing 'the Nobility and Gentry' of the 'pleasure marquees and tents' which he had for sale, while also noting that he would supply marquees 'for dejeuners and pleasure parties on the shortest notice.'[71] There was a great degree of sophistication and organisation associated with archery meetings, which ensured that everything went off smoothly and that all aspects of the day, both social and sporting, were covered. This included the provision of 'iced champagne and other sparkling wines, obtained at Mr. B.P. Phelan's establishment,' Clonmel, which cost £5.[72] This show of strength, in terms of luncheons, dinners, and accompanying drinks, were aspects of the day. They clearly illustrated the degree to which money was no object, ensuring that meetings were of the very best order. Days such as these were a boost to the local economy. Sport generated an industry and economy around it.

As has been demonstrated, the sports played within the estate wall were not unique to Ireland; they had taken hold throughout Great Britain. While the local gentry saw themselves as residing in a particular neighbourhood, sport provided wider horizons. Sport was another means through which established networks of people could meet. In 1864, at the commencement of the archery season, a report on the activities of the South Tipperary club noted that 'in no country as in Great Britain or Ireland are sports and pastimes so universally patronised, encouraged and supported. In no other country are attempts made, more especially, to introduce and sustain an amusement, in which both sexes can take a mutual

[70] *Freeman's Journal*, 8 Aug. 1850.
[71] *Freeman's Journal*, 9 Aug. 1851.
[72] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 12 Sept. 1863; 19 Mar. 1864.

part.' (Figure 7)[73] This is what archery, croquet and, latterly, lawn tennis did. But this aspect of sport was confined to the middle and upper classes in Tipperary and Ireland.

Figure 7: Archery meeting at Marlfield House, date unknown. (Source: Irish Architectural Archive)

As far as archery was concerned, it gave women the first real opportunity to actively participate in sporting recreation. From the very outset, wives and daughters from the country house network competed. Records of the winning scores appeared in the local press and all clubs set about acquiring prizes to present to the victors. Prizes such as brooches, lockets and chains were purchased for the winning ladies. As the accounts of the South Tipperary club illustrate, these prizes were not purchased cheaply. In 1864, prizes awarded for the three club meetings accounted for £68 5*s* out of an income of 'little more than £80 for the year.'[74] There was nothing cheap with the archers of Tipperary. In August 1861, a joint meeting of the Kilcommon Archers and the South Tipperary Bowmen was described as 'a truly splendid

[73] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 18 June 1864.
[74] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 19 Mar. 1864.

event' with the shooting ground 'festooned [with] the flags of all nations, conspicuous among them the insignia of maritime Britannia.'[75] The meeting was also remarkable for the presentation of a '*wooden spoon*' to the lady who scored the lowest number of hits. From a Tipperary perspective, Lucy Quin, Loughloher Castle, was more than capable of holding her own amongst female competitors. At the first private meeting of the Co. Carlow archery club, at Kilmeany in July 1864, she carried off the Ladies' Challenge Cup. She also emerged victorious at the same venue later in October, after she was allowed to participate as an invited guest.[76]

Though Martin Johnes has found some evidence regarding the cost of joining archery clubs in England and Wales, no such information is available for Tipperary.[77] Brian Griffin has noted that an annual subscription of ten shillings, together with a one shilling entrance fee, was levied on prospective members of the Kilkenny Archers in 1860.[78] Club accounts for 1863 show that subscriptions for the year for the South Tipperary Bowmen amounted to £89. This figure is not specific in terms of club numbers or individual subscription costs.[79] Miss Wade received £3 3*s* 10*d* for what were described as 'evening refreshments'. The *Clonmel Chronicle* also received payment of £3 8*s*, probably for notifications of forthcoming meetings. As such, fees for prizes and ancillary expenses were a draw on the club but that they were not in debt was perceived as a positive indication that the club was strong. Yet there was a desire that the club should have more members. As previously noted, it was not unknown for the club to impose a dinner charge, at the conclusion of a meeting, with two

[75] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 31 Aug. 1861.
[76] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 27 July 1864; 8 Oct. 1864.
[77] Johnes. 'Archery in England and Wales,' p. 201.
[78] Griffin, 'Archery as an elite pursuit,' p. 163.
[79] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 19 Mar. 1864.

shillings and six pence charged for dinner in 1861.[80] Ten years later, charges for attendance at an archery meeting dance in Clonmel courthouse were seven shillings and six pence for gentleman and five shillings for ladies, with morning or evening dress optional.[81]

In common with other clubs, such as those in Westmeath, female members of Tipperary clubs 'benefited from positive discrimination.'[82] In respect of annual subscriptions and other fees women had to pay less than their male counterparts. Similar preferential subscription rates for women were found in Scotland.[83] In Tipperary changes were on the way. From 1863 attendance at the dance following an archery meeting was open to non-members.[84] But by this stage the fascination with archery had waned. No further reports or activities of the South Tipperary Bowmen appeared in the press. The club passed into oblivion with no lamentations for its passing. There is no evidence to suggest that it was subsumed into a croquet or lawn tennis club, similar to that which occurred with the Cashel archery and croquet club.[85] It is probably not a coincidence that at exactly the same period, the early 1860s, the country witnessed the spread of 'Fenian Fever.' Landlords and their families were terrified that they were going to be murdered in their beds. The last thing they were going to do was gather conspicuously to play at bows and arrows.

Griffin has shown how a decline in archery was due in no small part to the appeal of more contemporary sports such as lawn tennis. These sports were organised in a formalised club

[80] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 3 July 1861.
[81] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 5 July 1871.
[82] Tom Hunt. 'Women and sport in Victorian Westmeath' in *Irish economic and social history: The Journal of the Economic and Social History Society of Ireland*, Vol. xxxiv p. 35.
[83] Neil L. Tranter. 'Organized sport and the middle-class woman in nineteenth-century Scotland' in *The International Journal of the History of Sport*. Vol. 6, No. 1. (1989), p. 44.
[84] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 16 Sept. 1871.
[85] *Nenagh Guardian*, 24 July 1879; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 11 Sept. 1869; 13 July 1872.

structure and they had a competitive element which was more appealing than archery.[86] Indeed, new lawn tennis clubs emerged from pre-existing archery clubs. In 1877, the Monkstown Tennis Club emerged from the County of Dublin Archery Club, while the Downshire Archers also played tennis in 1877.[87]

This section has looked at the growth and successful spread of archery among a specific tier of people in Tipperary society; they were upper class, affluent, and exclusive. Support of archery and the nature of the leading clubs in Tipperary mirrored other clubs around Ireland. That these exclusive clubs were able to restrict membership only to those deemed socially acceptable was indicative of self-regulation. Why should it be any other way? Archery was but a means to an end. It facilitated the coming together of a narrow strand of a local, or extended, community. It was an occasion 'for enjoyable socialising and group bonding..., generous hospitality and social status at a local and wider level.'[88] Above all, archery gave women an early opportunity to not only attend but to actively compete in a sport. The value of prizes on offer was far in excess of that offered for those who competed in the athletics arena, as is demonstrated in Chapter Five. Unlike the gentleman amateur, there were no problems associated with females receiving prize money at archery. As the appeal of archery declined croquet and lawn tennis filled the void. But, as is shown in the next two sections, there was a distinct geographical split in relation to the location of these sports.

Croquet

This section explores the advent of croquet as a country house sport and as a recreational pursuit among the Tipperary gentry. While it did not capture the imagination of the people to

[86] Griffin, 'Archery as an elite pursuit,' pp 170-71.
[87] Griffin, 'Archery as an elite pursuit,' p. 171.
[88] Griffin, 'Archery as an elite pursuit,' p. 171.

the same extent as archery, its appearance as a recreational sport, which like archery, was open to women, was indicative of how sporting fashions came and went. What differentiated croquet from archery was that it was a lawn game which did not develop into a network of clubs or societies as archery did. The only club to incorporate croquet into its title was the Rock Archery and Croquet Club in Cashel. Essentially, croquet provided not only recreation but also opportunities to spend time with friends and acquaintances of the same class while awaiting the arrival of the hunting season.

In July 1869, at the opening meeting of the Rock Archery Club, both croquet and archery were played. It was noted that 'the attractions of "croquet" seemed to have proved so thoroughly influential as to leave its sister sport rather under a cloud.'[89] Unlike other archery meetings at this time, those held in Cashel included both archery and croquet, with competitions for both male and female members.[90] Croquet, though obviously quite different to archery, fulfilled the same role. It was a recreational activity which was played on a country house lawn and the recreation invited the sexes to mix. It had none of the pseudo-medieval characteristics which were attributable to archery. It was an activity which brought the lesser gentry together in Cashel and in Nenagh. Though no evidence has been found to indicate that croquet was played on the bigger estates, it is possible that it was played there but simply went unrecorded.[91] The South Tipperary Bowmen failed to reappear after the 1871 season ended. However, there is no evidence to suggest that the society re-emerged in another guise. There is nothing to indicate that it was reincarnated as a croquet club. Such was the frequency of archery reports in the local *Clonmel Chronicle* that an absence of croquet

[89] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 7 July 1869.
[90] *Nenagh Guardian*, 4 Aug. 1869; 17 Aug. 1870; *Cashel Gazette*, 11 Sept. 1869; 13 Aug. 1870; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 23 July 1870; 13 July 1872.
[91] This assertion is based on a lack of documentary evidence in the contemporary press. As accounts of the South Tipperary Bowmen disappear from the press no data is given to suggest that a croquet club or society was established in south Tipperary, apart from the Rock Archery and Croquet Club.

reports in this newspaper suggests that no croquet club or society was established. Reasons for this have not been identified. With the Rock Archery and Croquet club this did not need to happen as the club name carried both sports. The same thing occurred in north Tipperary with the Ormond Archery Club and the Ormond Croquet club. The Ormond Archers were founded in March 1859.[92] This club had a short life span. It was only in existence for two seasons.[93] When a list of those who attended a meeting of this club in late June 1859 is compared with a list of those who attended a meeting of the Ormond Croquet club in September 1875 eleven of the same names appeared in both reports and there are other family names common to both.[94] This suggests that the Ormond Archery club was reinvented as the Ormond Croquet club in August 1875.[95]

Croquet afternoons in Ormond country required club members to attend at the residence of whichever member was hosting the reunion.[96] Not only did this have the advantage of spreading croquet, but it also encouraged other country houses to take up the sport. It also lessened the cost on one specific family of bearing the burden of entertaining and providing refreshments and meals for guests. Though there was a good degree of support for croquet at this time it was less than that afforded to archery. Another sporting evolution was about to take place and it was one which the Tipperary elite took to their hearts. It did great injury to the fledgling croquet circuit. This sport was lawn tennis.

[92] *Nenagh Guardian*, 5 Mar. 1859.
[93] The last reference for the Ormond Archery Club identified in the course of this study was in the *Nenagh Guardian*, 11 Aug. 1860. Press reports do not extend further than two years for the club.
[94] *Nenagh Guardian*, 2 July 1859; 8 Sept. 1875.
[95] *Nenagh Guardian*, 28 Aug. 1875.
[96] The term reunion was widely used at this time when a croquet gathering took place. It was subsequently used for lawn tennis meetings.

This section, though brief, has looked at a sport which, in essence, was an intermediary between archery and lawn tennis. Croquet sets were purchased as a box game and played informally. It is likely that many games were played in such a manner and went unrecorded. There was no need for players to establish a club structure as the games played were a private activity, hence the absence of extensive reports on croquet in the press. Though it became popular as a recreational pursuit among some residents of the country houses in Tipperary, there is no documentary evidence to suggest that it was taken up in and around Clonmel. This suggests that there may have been other factors determining the nature of elite recreation in this part of the county or that croquet simply went unrecorded. However, the Ormond Croquet Club was about to undergo another reincarnation, this time as a lawn tennis club. For those associated with this club it was a third change of sporting direction.

Lawn Tennis

This section looks at lawn tennis as another example of fashionable country house recreation. It was one which was to outlive its predecessors as a sport, once again open to both male and female competitors. It stood the test of time and it remained as a constant in the sporting history of Tipperary.

On 23 February 1874, Major Walter C. Wingfield patented a 'New and Improved Court for Playing the Ancient game of Tennis' which he called sphairsitke.[97] J.G. Smyth has noted that 'a similar game had been played at Edgbaston,' Birmingham in 1868.[98] Unlike other sports that had their origin in England lawn tennis was remarkable for the speed by which it appeared in both Ireland and Tipperary. If one bears in mind that archery took almost seventy years to cross the Irish Sea, lawn tennis took only two years. Lawn tennis benefitted from

[97] Hiner Gillmeister. *Tennis: a cultural history* (New York, 1998), pp 172-77.
[98] J.G. Smyth. *Lawn tennis*. (London, 1953), p. 2.

royal patronage and it was very popular throughout Great Britain. In essence, a lawn tennis craze became widespread not only in England but throughout Ireland.

In September 1875, at an end of season meeting of the Ormond Croquet Club, the day's amusements were rounded off with lawn tennis and yachting.[99] This was four years ahead of the earliest reference for the sport in Co. Westmeath.[100] Initially lawn tennis quickly consumed the passions of those people living in and around Nenagh. During the summer of 1876 a specific pattern of tennis playing developed which revolved around a circle of "at home" meetings that took place at the residences of the local gentry in much the same way as archery and croquet previously did.[101] The Ormond Club was the most active in the county with meetings in the summer of 1876 taking place on a weekly basis, typically on Friday afternoons.[102] In Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, 'Thursday afternoons were devoted to public tennis events,' suggesting that clubs had specific days set aside for practice and public matches.[103] Such regularity gave clubs a sense of purpose, coupled with the sociability of the occasion itself.

Many members of the Ormond Club also shared an interest in yachting on nearby Lough Derg. All of which suggests that sport was for those who could afford it and, in this respect, lawn tennis was no different. Though playing equipment was relatively inexpensive, when compared with that of hunting, it was the scale of lawn tennis which made it a preserve of the country house scene. In September 1878, the club gathered for the 'first meeting of this

[99] *Nenagh Guardian*, 8 Sept. 1875.
[100] Hunt. *Sport and society*, p. 79.
[101] The term 'at home' was applied to a meeting which took place at Willington, Nenagh. *Nenagh Guardian*, 19 Aug. 1876.
[102] *Nenagh Guardian*, 29 July 1876; 12 Aug. 1876; 19 Aug. 1876; 26 Aug. 1876; 30 Aug. 1876.
[103] Hunt. *Sport and society*, p. 79.

aristocratic amusement' on the grounds of Henry H. Poe.[104] The club had become firmly established and lawn tennis was as a popular summer activity to rival that of hunting in winter. Membership names of both the Ormond Tennis Club and Tipperary residents of the Ormond and Kings County Hunt were virtually identical. It was as if they removed their tennis whites at the end of summer and donned the red coat for the hunting season.[105]

In a similar fashion to archery and croquet, female participation was high. However, it was the nature of the sport that was different. Unlike the other two recreations, lawn tennis was more physical and the game required ladies to compete in long dresses while also wearing some form of head cover, either a scarf or hat. To play matches or tournaments, the sport came with a price. It cost five shillings to compete in a match. Regularly these matches were associated with club tournaments.[106] To compete in a doubles match also incurred a five shilling entrance fee. While initially tennis matches were private occasions, the advent of club tournaments attracted local interest. In July 1879, at a meeting of the Ormond Club which was followed by a dance, there were over one hundred and twenty people present.[107] One month later, at a 'lawn tennis party on a grand scale' at Inane, Roscrea, there were one hundred and fifty people present.[108]

Similar to other sporting recreations there were local and national businessmen who sought to cash in on the new appeal of lawn tennis. Shopkeepers in Nenagh were prompt in advertising their wares in the local press. 'Mixed grasses for lawn tennis and croquet grounds' were

[104] *Nenagh Guardian*, 14 Sept. 1878.
[105] For a comparative list of names for those in attendance at a lawn tennis meet in 1878 and those who followed the Ormond Hunt, in 1877, see *Nenagh Guardian*, 8 Dec. 1877; 14 Sept. 1878.
[106] *Nenagh Guardian*, 2 July 1879; 10 June 1880.
[107] *Nenagh Guardian*, 12 July 1879.
[108] *Nenagh Guardian*, 23 Aug. 1879.

available from Robert Hodgins in 1877.[109] In 1879, Day Brothers could offer for the 'summer season, [equipment for] lawn tennis, croquet, cricket and other amusing games.'[110] Also in that year, and once again on Castle Street, Nenagh, as were the previous two businesses, the curiously named 'India-rubber and Gutta-percha Warehouse' had on offer 'ladies' tennis shoes, best make, [with] corrugated soles.'[111] Local businesses were alive to the opportunities which sporting recreation could bring in terms of sales and they promptly set about acquiring stock. This in turn assisted in advancing the game at a local level.

As Tom Hunt has observed, there was a strong connection between romance and lawn tennis in Co. Westmeath and this was also the case in north Tipperary.[112] An account of a meeting at Solsborough, north of Nenagh, concluded with poetic verse which included

> I'm very fond of spooning dear,
> When there is no one by,
> I like to squeeze your pretty hand,
> And meet your glances shy.[113]

Tea and other refreshments facilitated romantic encounters. Single club members of both sexes could meet in what was still a confined and private setting. Reports of lawn tennis meetings were submitted by correspondents to the local press, an arrangement which seems to have suited the Ormond and Cashel clubs. But on one occasion in 1881, when a correspondent forwarded an account of a tennis meeting at Busherstown, 'the hospitable seat of that most deservedly popular landlord, George J. Minchin, Esq., D.L., J.P.,' his actions were none too pleasing to Minchin.[114] He promptly wrote to the *Nenagh Guardian* 'expressing dissatisfaction at a private little tennis party' on his lawn which was reported in

[109] *Nenagh Guardian*, 28 Mar. 1877.
[110] *Nenagh Guardian*, 26 Apr. 1879.
[111] *Nenagh Guardian*, 28 June 1879.
[112] Hunt, *Sport and society*, p. 78.
[113] *Nenagh Guardian*, 14 Sept. 1878.
[114] *Nenagh Guardian*, 23 July 1881.

the paper.[115] This indicates that some private meetings were principally that and, as such, not for public consumption.

It seems likely that much lawn tennis took place in the south of the county but, unlike the activities of the Ormond and Cashel clubs, went unrecorded in the newspapers. This was similar to croquet. Many games took place in a private setting as purely social occasions and thus went unreported. These were distinct from the club format which had games organised around competition. There was also the issue that facilities in Clonmel did not favour the playing of tennis. In 1878, the officers of the Royal Artillery in the local garrison, who were supportive of the game, put up prizes for ladies competitions. Those who entered were handicapped according to their skill level.[116] That the officers provided lawn tennis facilities suggests that patronage, once so commonly afforded to sport in the south Tipperary communities, was not as yet as apparent as it was in the north of the county.

A Clonmel businessman, Charles Carrothers, purchased the Clonmel Skating Rink and made it available for skating and lawn tennis matches in October 1878.[117] However, one year later, a report of a ladies' handicap meeting on the rink grounds illustrated the difficulties facing the connoisseurs of tennis in the town. It was stated that 'the Rink (the only ground available) is a far from suitable place for playing tennis matches on, being too short for the regulation sized court, thus cramping the play...On this account it is very much regretted that a club for the purpose of playing lawn tennis, cricket and football matches, has not as yet been formed in so flourishing a town as Clonmel, and such a want of enterprise is much to be deplored'.[118] Yet, several of those present were the very people who openly and actively supported

[115] *Nenagh Guardian*, 27 July 1881.
[116] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 15 June 1878; 19 June 1878.
[117] *Tipperary Free Press*, 1 Oct. 1878.
[118] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 8 Oct. 1879.

archery, including the Earl and Countess of Donoughmore on whose grounds the archery club was based. Press reports show that there were lawn tennis tournaments in Clonmel in the latter half of the 1890s, with a club 'newly started' in 1897.[119] This era also predates the approximate date for the establishment of a lawn tennis club in the town around 1908.[120]

Essentially, lawn tennis in Clonmel failed to establish itself in the same manner as it had in the north of the county, principally due to a lack of facilities. Elsewhere, at Cashel, Nenagh and Tipperary the game established itself as a staple in the country house network. It was a game principally associated with the protestant members of the various communities. Inter-club matches and tournaments added to the local competitive nature of the game. The lawn tennis championships of Ireland commenced in 1879, organised by Fitzwilliam Lawn Tennis Club in Dublin, which further added to the appeal of the sport. With a national competition in place there was an opportunity for better players to entertain the prospect of honour outside of the Tipperary circuit. Though outside the remit of this study, such a situation did occur in 1890 when Lena Rice, Marlhill, Cahir, became the first, and only, Irish winner of the ladies championship at Wimbledon.[121]

This section has looked at the growth and development of lawn tennis in Tipperary. Coinciding as it did with the development of other sports in the county, lawn tennis gave another dimension to the range of sports then available to middle and upper class society. These were the classes which could afford adequate leisure time to pursue such activities. Yet, what was strange about the growth of lawn tennis was that it did not mirror that of

[119] *Freeman's Journal*, 20 July 1897, p. 7; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 13 Aug. 1898; *Nenagh Guardian*, 27 Aug. 1898; *Freeman's Journal*, 2 Aug. 1899, p. 7.
[120] Tom Higgins. *The history of Irish tennis* (Sligo, 2006), p. 228.
[121] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 5 July 1890; Virginia Wade and Jean Rafferty. *Ladies of the court: a century of women at Wimbledon* (London, 1984), p.189.; Eileen Bell. 'Lena Rice of New Inn – the only Irish ladies Wimbledon champion' in *Tipperary Historical Journal 1988*, pp 13-4.

archery. Rather, it followed a similar distribution pattern to that of croquet. In 1877, croquet and lawn tennis were both adopted in the title of the All England Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club, further emphasising the close links between the two sports and their elite social location.[122] As the 1880s progressed so too did lawn tennis. Unlike hunting to hounds it did not suffer any ill effects from land agitation in the aftermath of the founding of the Land League in 1879, principally because the games took place within the confines of the country house estate.

Angling and Game

This section looks at the extent to which owners and residents of country house estates used their privileged position in society for their own benefit as they utilised the rivers, lakes and countryside as another means to indulge their passion for recreation. This section looks at the degree to which landlords marshalled the rivers, especially the Suir, by means of the Suir Preservation Society and determined that only members were allowed fish on its waters. Similar controls extended over the management of land and prosecutions for trespass and hunting for game without a licence typified measures to counter the threat posed by poachers and unlicensed hunters. Local businessmen also fell foul of the society as they used the rigours of the legislative procedures to prosecute mill owners whose sluice gates and weirs did not conform to specifications.

Children reared in country homes and estates regularly found themselves in the company of estate employees such as game keepers and servants.[123] They introduced children to the vagaries of sport especially field sports. These sports were the preserve of the landed classes

[122] Smyth, *Lawn tennis*, p. 2.
[123] Dooley, *The decline of the big house*, p. 49.

and those found trespassing were regularly brought before the local magistrates.[124] In essence, it was a cosy cartel, for the magistrates were also found at country house recreational activities. Making use of the law against trespass and poaching often served to emphasise the disparity between the landed and landless members of a community. This entrenchment was even more apparent with the control of fishing rights. While salmon and trout were abundant in the river Suir, which bisected the county from north to south, there was a great sense of restriction relating to those who could and could not fish in its waters. It was not only the lower classes who ran into trouble with the water bailiffs. Some mill owners were also brought before the courts for trapping fish in mill races and weirs.[125]

Illegal fishing for salmon in the closed season regularly resulted in the appearance of men before the local courts.[126] In one such instance it was claimed that it was 'a law for the oppression of the poor and the amusement of the rich and proud.'[127] Legislation pertaining to fishing was designed to protect river stock.[128] License fees placed a further restriction on the freedom of the lower classes to fish. The cost of a single salmon rod licence was ten shillings, while a cross-line and salmon rod license was £1.[129] Fishermen caught without a license were also brought before the courts. In 1851 for example, the bailiff, Thomas Moroney, charged Edward Jones for fishing for salmon with cross-lines without a licence.[130] Such was the power of the Suir Preservation Society that they, as a body of landowners, resident magistrates and justices of the peace, were in a position to virtually control fishing rights for

[124] For an overview of resident magistrates in Ireland see Penny Bonsall, *The Irish RMs: the resident magistrates in the British administration in Ireland* (Dublin, 19997).
[125] *Tipperary Weekly News*, 23 Jan. 1858.
[126] *Tipperary Free Press*, 9 Nov. 1844.
[127] *Tipperary Free Press*, 19 July 1845.
[128] 'An act for the protection and improvement of the salmon, trout, and other inland fisheries of Ireland [31 August 1848]' in *A collection of the public general statutes, passed in the eleventh and twelfth year of the reign of her majesty Queen Victoria* (London, 1848), pp 518-528. *Tipperary Free Press*, 24 Jan. 1849.
[129] *Tipperary Free Press*, 24 Jan. 1849.
[130] *Tipperary Free Press*, 2 Apr. 1851.

the length of the Suir and its tributaries. Established in 1857, the Society sought 'to aid and assist the conservators for the better and more effectually preserving and increasing the breed of salmon and trout in the River Suir and its tributaries.'[131] Water bailiffs were employed at a rate of thirty shillings per month, with four district committees appointed to supervise them.[132] Income for 1858, based on subscriptions and other funds, was £188.[133] The expenditure for 1859 was budgeted at £166. The Suir Preservation Society advised that directions should be given to gamekeepers to assist water bailiffs in their 'several duties'.[134]

Two issues arise here. Firstly, private property was safeguarded and the law of trespass was enforced to keep poachers away from rivers which ran through estate lands. Secondly, sporting stocks were controlled. Bailiffs were not only there to stop poaching, they also monitored the actions of mill owners and looked out for the presence of otters in the rivers. A small bounty was offered per head of otter trapped.[135] This reward was withdrawn in 1861 due to the 'state of the funds of the Suir Preservation Society'.[136] However, with increasing stocks there was scope for an enhanced angling experience in the south of the county.

The names of men who held 'certificates to kill game' appeared in the local press in the latter half of the 1850s.[137] These certificates were essentially a membership card in all but name. Having paid the requisite fee, the holder of such a licence was at liberty to shoot game, provided there was no attempt to trespass on lands where he was not invited or permitted to shoot. Certificates were also granted to game-keepers who were appointed by specific named

[131] *Tipperary Free Press*, 13 Oct. 1857.
[132] *Tipperary Free Press*, 13 Oct. 1857; 17 July 1860.
[133] *Tipperary Free Press*, 9 Nov. 1858.
[134] *Tipperary Free Press*, 9 Oct. 1857
[135] *Tipperary Free Press*, 9 Oct. 1857.
[136] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 6 Nov. 1861.
[137] *Tipperary Free Press*, 9 Dec. 1856; 16 Oct. 1857; 10 Nov. 1857; 15 Nov. 1859.

individuals. It was further noted that rewards would be given to those 'who may supply information against persons sporting without certificates.'[138] Any person shooting snipe or woodcock without a game certificate was subject to a penalty of £20 under the game act, 5th and 6th Vic. Chap. 81. Sec. 5.[139] In 1860, however, a change in the game laws displayed a marked difference as to how the law was interpreted in Ireland and Great Britain.[140] Under the terms of the act, 15 & 16 Vic. C. 81, Sec. 8, it was called a licence in Great Britain but it was a certificate in Ireland. Furthermore, the penalty for taking game without a licence in Great Britain was £20, whereas in Ireland it incurred a fine of £50. Another anomaly was that in Britain one could kill rabbits without a licence, but not in Ireland. Though country estate owners and game keepers were a step above others in rural society in Ireland they were a few steps behind their contemporaries on the British mainland.

The varied interests of Nathaniel Buckley, of Ryecroft, Ashton-under-Lyme, as landowner, cotton mill owner and Liberal politician, did not prevent him from visiting his preserves on the Galtee Mountains.[141] In 1873, he brought to his Tipperary estates 'for the purpose of enjoying with his friends, Richard Shaw, Esq. M.P, Mr. Shaw, junr., and Edward Collier, Esq., the pleasures of the grouse shooting season.'[142] Due to the 'unceasing care of the keepers,' the shooting season of 1874-75 yielded '23 pheasants, 235 partridges, 432 hares, 167 rabbits, 213 woodcock, 157 snipe, 5 royal bucks, and 414 grouse,' with the 1875-76 season expected to surpass the previous one in terms of game bagged.[143] These men could sail into Ireland, shoot and bag any game they so desired. But, for others, it was the full

[138] *Tipperary Free Press*, 16 Oct. 1857.
[139] *Tipperary Free Press*, 31 Dec. 1845.
[140] *Tipperary Free Press*, 12 Oct. 1860.
[141] Hussey de Burgh. *The landowners of Ireland*, p. 60. John Bateman. *The great landowners of Great Britain and Ireland* (reprint New York, 1970), p. 65. Mark Bence-Jones. *Burke's guide to country houses: volume 1 : Ireland* (London, 1978), p. 130.
[142] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 6 Sept. 1873.
[143] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 1 Sept. 1875.

rigors of the law if one trespassed on game preserves. Viscount Lismore, Shanbally Castle, in the south west of the county, also had game rights for that part of his estate that extended into the Galtee Mountains. Poison was liberally placed on this part of his estate to preserve game.[144] Game preservation notices appeared with increasing regularity in the local press from 1851, with lands owned by various individuals 'strictly preserved' while any persons found trespassing 'in pursuit of game' were prosecuted.[145] In 1868, one such individual found trespassing with a dead rabbit in his possession, appeared before the Tipperary Petty Sessions where he was fined £1 and costs.[146] Estate and farm owners were alive to the threat of poaching and trespassing. They appeared to have not fully appreciated the impact which hunting parties were having on the preservation of game.

In February 1869, eleven guns shooting on the Dundrum estate of Viscount Hawarden, bagged 60 woodcocks, 7 hares, 99 rabbits and one deer, and 'in accordance with the established custom of the family, the produce of the first day's shooting [was] sent to her Majesty.'[147] While the coverts were maintained with plentiful game, gamekeepers were busy bringing trespassers before the magistrates and also endeavouring to maintain an adequate stock within their respective preserves. A Game Preservation Association was established for the Cahir district in July 1870 to assist in this matter by ensuring that coverts were maintained.[148] At the meeting £42 was subscribed to assist the association with its efforts. This suggests that the rearing and management of wildfowl and game was well advanced, giving local employment to ensure that the coverts were constantly replenished to meet the needs of the game hunters and their associates. The use of game keepers was another example

[144] *Tipperary Free Press*, 19 Sept. 1849; 26 Mar. 1851; 22 Apr. 1856. *Clonmel Chronicle*, 12 Apr. 1876; 11 Mar. 1875
[145] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 15 Sept. 1869; 13 Nov. 1869; 21 Sept. 1870.
[146] *Nenagh Guardian*, 19 Dec. 1868.
[147] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 13 Feb. 1869.
[148] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 23 July 1870.

of the employment provided by sport. This, coupled with advances made in other elite field sports, such as hunting to hounds, shooting and fishing, indicate that a strong support network was required to underpin these activities. Blacksmiths, leather workers, farriers, and dealers in sporting goods, all assisted in transforming these recreations into more clearly defined physical sports. A tipping point had been reached whereby services were required to underpin their growth.

Throughout the 1860s and 1870s, the local press carried what can only be described as self-contributed reports of fishing and game shooting.[149] Col. Browne, 93rd Highlanders, killed two salmon, each weighing thirty-three pounds, 'on the portion of the Suir belonging to Colonel the Hon. and Lady Margaret Charteris' at Cahir.[150] A later report noted that Capt. W. Barton caught three fish 'on that portion of the River Suir belonging to Mr. Clibborn'.[151] Similarly, the angling deeds of Charles Langley, Cabra Castle, Thurles, could not have appeared in the local press without he, or an associate, forwarding the information.[152] This self-reporting was a feature of sport in Tipperary at this time, but while team sports may have had a wider appeal, game hunters in Tipperary were not shy in forwarding data relating to their deeds.

In order for the stocks to be maintained at adequate levels the conservators required finance and this was principally derived from the license fee of ten shillings for one season's fishing.[153] With news of good catches made on the rivers of Tipperary appearing in the press, angling and fishing as a means of deriving income attracted 'the humble as well as the

[149] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 18 Mar. 1865; 26 April 1865; 30 May 1866; 20 Feb. 1869. *Nenagh Guardian*, 25 Apr. 1868.
[150] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 1 Mar. 1873.
[151] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 5 May 1875.
[152] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 19 May 1880; 29 May 1880; 28 July 1880.
[153] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 17 Feb. 1864.

gentleman angler.' It was further noted that 'large hampers of fish...are almost daily sent off by railway "to feed John Bull," who pays well for what he receives'.[154]

This section has shown how landowners maximised the resources of their country estates to the full and how they used the law to ensure that fish and game were preserved for the sole use of their family, associates and friends. After a day shooting or fishing a full bag was the ultimate prize. Self-contributed angling reports to the local press mirrored those of archery, croquet and lawn tennis. It was a way of letting one's peers know how much one had shot or caught. This section has also highlighted the occupational role which gamekeepers had in attending to the needs of their employer by ensuring adequate game, coverts and breeding stock. While estate owners satisfied their own recreational needs, there was also the issue of employment as gamekeepers, fowlers and water bailiffs who maintained vigilance over their lands and waters.

Yachting

Though outside the bounds of the estate wall this last section looks at Lough Derg as an amenity for people to indulge their passion for yachting and sailing. Lough Derg borders three counties - Tipperary, Galway and Clare. It is the largest of the three principal lakes on the river Shannon, before it enters the Atlantic Ocean at Limerick. In Victorian Tipperary it provided a means for the landowners in its hinterland to add another sporting recreation to the list of their amusements. While Lough Derg was a public place, the foreshore and jetties were not. The lake was the only location in the county where yachting could take place on such a

[154] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 17 Feb. 1864.

scale. The lake had a surface area of 118 square kilometres (forty-six square miles).[155] It was twenty-five miles long (Figure 8).[156]

The oldest yacht club in the world was established in Cork harbour in 1720 bearing the title of the 'Water Club of the Harbour of Cork.'[157] Records for the club do not exist from 1765 to 1806 but it was re-established in 1828 as the Cork Yacht Club.[158] A yacht club existed on Lough Derg in 1837 when a regatta was held on the lake, although it was claimed that the origins of the club were much earlier'.[159] Regattas were held on an almost annual basis with little interruption, even for the Great Famine, except for the period 1863-1871 inclusive. No obvious evidence has come to light as to why this barren period occurred though it would appear that it was linked to an absence of patronage. The *Nenagh Guardian* carried several letters on the subject as yachtsmen lamented the absence of a regatta, mindful that regattas in other locations in Ireland continued.[160] Of these letters, two specifically referred to Captain Holmes as the man to whom the successful staging of a regatta could be entrusted. He was an active supporter of the regatta prior to its cessation, hosting post-regatta parties. He was also Commodore of the Lough Derg Yacht Club.[161] When the regatta resumed in 1872, he 'kindly gave free access through his handsome grounds to visitors.'[162] This suggests that owing to a lack of support from Captain Holmes, the whole enterprise which was the Lough Derg

[155] Brian Lalor (ed). *The encyclopaedia of Ireland* (Dublin, 2003), p. 647.
[156] William Stokes. *Pictorial survey and tourists guide to Lough Derg and the river Shannon* (London, 1842), p. 6.
[157] Peter Heaton. *Yachting: a history* (London, 1955), pp 57-8. Douglas Phillips-Birt. *The history of yachting* (London, 1974), pp 21-2.
[158] Phillips-Birt. *History of yachting*, p. 22.
[159] Hardress Waller, 'Lough Derg yacht club' in *Cois Deirge* (Summer, 1980), p. 8. The current club flag bears an inception date of 1835, though Waller has noted that 'no records of the LDYC have survived prior to 1883,' Waller 'Lough Derg yacht club' p. 8.
[160] *Nenagh Guardian*, 21 July 1865; 29 Aug. 1866; 30 Aug. 1871.
[161] *Nenagh Guardian*, 13 July 1859; 6 Sept. 1862.
[162] *Nenagh Guardian*, 14 Aug. 1872.

Regatta was compromised and, as a result, it failed to appear on the calendar for nine years. It further demonstrated the fragile and fickle nature of the sporting environment.

Figure 8: Map of Lough Derg, 1842 (Source: William Stokes)

Notifications of upcoming events and regattas were circulated to members. Advertisements were also placed in the local press. Regatta articles were similar to those for horse-racing. Full details of the races were given, inclusive of the name of the Commodore, sailing committee, prizes, entry fees and contact details for the honorary secretary.[163] On occasions, there was an 'ordinary' at a local hotel. One stipulation, which was adhered to in all regattas, was that all members of the club would 'provide their yachts with the plain red "Burgee" which has been adopted by the club'.[164] At the outset the club was based in Portumna Bay, with Lord Avonmore, Belle Isle, Commodore in the club's formative years (Figure 9).[165] The

[163] The title of Commodore is that given to the president of a yacht club. *Nenagh Guardian*, 9 Aug. 1845; 27 June 1846; 5 July 1854; 10 Sept. 1856; 2 Aug. 1873; 29 July 1876.
[164] The 'burgee' was a small red triangular flag, emblazoned with three gold coloured shamrock sprigs. *Nenagh Guardian*, 5 July 1854.
[165] Waller. 'Lough Derg yacht club,' p. 8.

majority of the vessels used were yachts owned by many of the landowners residing near the lake. Bassett Holmes had a cutter yacht, *Avenger*, built on the shores of Lough Derg in 1852, by George Marshall, Ringsend, Dublin.[166]

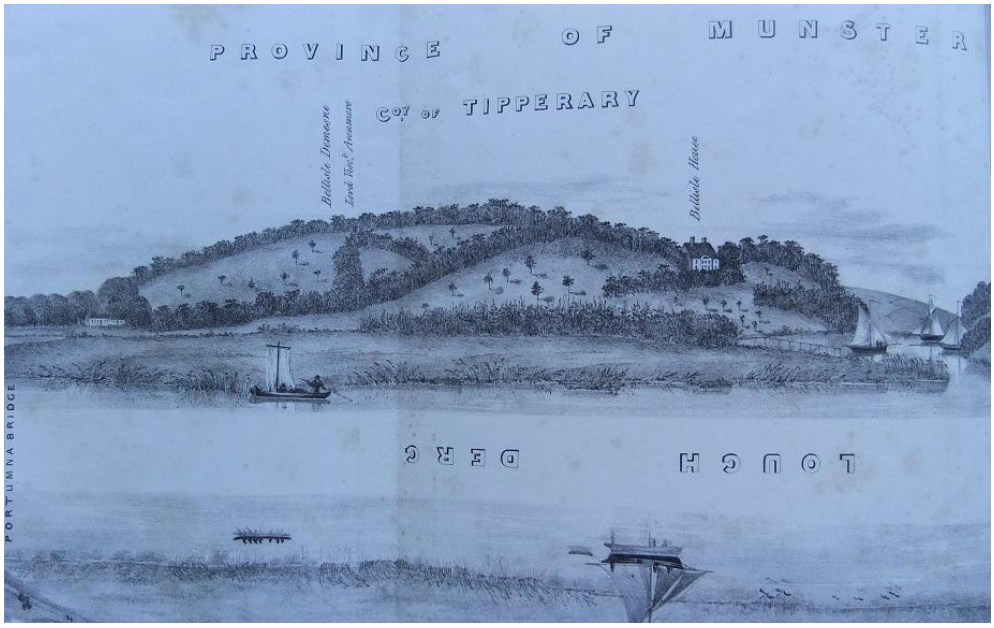

Figure 9: Location of Belle Isle on the shores of Lough Derg, 1842. (Source: William Stokes)

Though there was a yacht club in existence, the evidence suggests that it was not as stable or strong as some would have desired. In June 1865, in a letter to the local press 'A lover of aquatics' queried the discontinuation of regattas on Lough Derg 'for the past couple of years.'[167] In reply, the editor of the *Nenagh Guardian* concurred with the views of the letter writer, noting that the regatta was 'eminently calculated to enlarge and refine those socialising and civilizing tendencies of our nature, that ennoble and distinguish enlightened humanity' while also apportioning blame to the 'apathy of the inhabitants of our town and its neighbourhood.' Thus the editor was inclined to look for an explanation for the regrettable absence of a regatta in the attitude of the population at large rather than focusing on the

[166] *Nenagh Guardian*, 11 Aug. 1852.
[167] *Nenagh Guardian*, 21 June 1865.

members of the yacht club. In 1866, a similar letter of discontent from 'Alpha' urged 'some active and influential resident' to promote the regatta. This plea was once again to fall on deaf ears.[168] By 1871, matters had still not improved and another letter writer, 'A lover of sport,' lamented the absence of a regatta on the lake.[169] He noted that 'we have horse races annually, which attract the scum of society from every part of Ireland' something, he opined, which would not happen at a regatta. In a similar fashion to the writer of 1865, he too called on Captain Holmes to take the initiative, stating that Holmes would receive the support of 'every gentleman in the neighbourhood, and I promise him by every merchant and shopkeeper in Nenagh'.

In July 1872, normal service was resumed. The regatta was re-established thanks to the exertions of the High Sherriff of Tipperary, Captain Bassett W. Holmes. Yachts varied in tonnage. Bassett Holmes' *Corsair* weighed fifteen tons, while W. Waller's *Fairy* weighed six tons (Figure 10). In regattas, yachts were handicapped accordingly with the smaller craft given a timed head start ahead of other entries. Holmes resided at St. Davids, which was in close to the lake. When the regatta of 1878 ended 'some two hundred of the upper ten thousand, who were at St. Davids' were entertained by the Holmes family.[170] This is one of the key elements of yachting in north Tipperary. It further facilitated the country house residents to meet on a regular basis.

[168] *Nenagh Guardian*, 29 Aug. 1866.
[169] *Nenagh Guardian*, 30 Aug. 1871.
[170] *Nenagh Guardian*, 17 Aug. 1878.

Figure 10: Watercolour of *The Fairy* on Lough Derg, 1871. (Source: Lough Derg Yacht Club)

The relevance of yachting to the investigation of country house sports is that it was principally people who lived in these houses who participated in regattas on Lough Derg. Many resided close to the lake. But there were others, who lived away from its shoreline, such as the Bayly family of Debsborough, who were also active in the affairs of the yacht club. Such was the nature of the surrounding topography and geography that the regattas could also draw on participants from counties Clare and Galway. Yachts from further up the Shannon also participated.[171] When a list of names of those attending meetings of the Ormond Archers in 1859, the Lough Derg Regatta in 1872 and the Ormond Croquet Club in 1875 are cross-referenced, there are twenty instances of the same family surname appearing at two of the three meetings.[172] There are ten family names which are found in attendance at all three events. This was indicative of continuity and familial association over a sustained period. That these families maintained contact throughout the year indicated that considerable

[171] *Nenagh Guardian*, 11 Aug. 1852.
[172] *Nenagh Guardian*, 2 July 1859; 17 Aug. 1872; 8 Sept. 1875.

time and finance were directed towards recreational activities. This in turn led to local business benefitting from the economic spend involved in supporting these activities.

It also helped – and this was the case across all sports and recreations – that families were prepared to rotate meetings, thus sharing the burdens of organisation and expense. Granted, there was only one lake, yet the residences on its shores and in the surrounding countryside were used for tennis parties, post-regatta 'at home' parties, and other social occasions. It created a bond of fellowship and friendship which bound the Ormond country together. This bond continued through the winter hunting season where the same family names reappeared in a different sporting context, while following hounds with the Ormond and Kings County Hunt. This was a form of social elitism and exclusivity – they were not associated, and neither did they want to be, with the mercantile class – this was all about creating a social milieu which was exclusive. Thus a pattern of exclusivity was established across various sporting and social settings. There were many individuals whose links brought them into contact with more than one sporting sphere. Bassett Holmes, for example, was not only associated with yachting but also served on the committee of the Ormond Tennis Club and hosted meetings at his home.[173]

This section has chronicled the valuable role which the Lough Derg Yacht Club played in the lives of the land owners and communities of north Tipperary. The nucleus of its membership was drawn from the communities which surrounded the lake shore. It was a high status sport, one which required much capital, both in expenditure and maintenance of yachts. Yachting also required time away from one's residence and land, especially when regattas were held. A regatta lasted for three consecutive days. Races lasted several hours, necessitating a level of

[173] *Nenagh Guardian*, 30 Aug. 1876; 13 Aug. 1879.

fitness which was not required for croquet or archery, though lawn tennis did require physical exertion. Yachting on Lough Derg was another example of the way in which the country house community manipulated and utilised the countryside to their advantage. Skills learned while yachting could lead to a career in the Royal Navy, as is evidenced by the attendance of several navy personnel at regattas. More than anything, yachting was another status symbol, one which had a long legacy in county Tipperary.

Discussion

Sport within a country house setting was neither regular nor continuous. The number of estates where sporting diversions took place under the patronage of a resident landlord was not as extensive as it may initially appear. Income was a prime motivating factor in the successful operation of an estate or country house. Knocklofty House, for all its wealth and patronage of sport, was not immune to ill fortune. John, the 5th Earl of Donoughmore 'managed to run into considerable financial difficulties.'[174] This greatly impinged on the running of his estates which were spread over eight counties. At Barnane, evictions on the Carden estate in the pre-Famine period led to great unrest.[175] The collection of rent was always a bone of contention. Tenants, in the aftermath of Great Famine, sought alleviation at every opportunity. Of the landowners in the county 'only 178, or less than half of the total number,' were resident.[176] The management of their estates was entrusted to land agents, with much of the land 'held by tenants through a cumbersome web of leasing arrangements'.[177]

Table 4 gives a breakdown of sporting activity throughout the forty-one year period covered by this thesis. Specific references to a sport have been counted and for the purposes of this

[174] Randall MacDonnell. *The lost houses of Ireland* (London, 2002), p. 152.
[175] *Tipperary Vindicator*, 2 Oct. 1844.
[176] Jones Hughes. 'Landholding and settlement,' p. 340.
[177] Jones Hughes. 'Landholding and settlement,, p. 343.

chapter, the data shows that cricket was the only constant team sport, as it was the earliest one codified. While there was great support for archery the specific numbers recorded are small, indicative of the narrow participation base. Similar claims may be made for croquet and lawn tennis, though the latter game continued to develop in the post-1880 period.

The data from Table 4 also demonstrates that society in general was relatively stable in the 1870s, allowing for a growth in cricket and hunting to hounds. This decade also witnessed the arrival of new recreational sports - croquet, lawn tennis, rugby union and cycling. There was no diffusion of lawn tennis, croquet or rugby to the lower classes in Tipperary. This just did not happen.

Table 4: The number of sports in Co Tipperary 1840-1880. Data was retrieved from twelve local newspapers, one national newspaper, the hunting journal of the 3rd Marquis of Waterford 1840-1849; the Ashbrook Union Cricket Club score book 1846-48, ten volumes of Petty Sessions records from 1854 to 1860 and the John Lawrence *Handbook of Cricket in Ireland* yearly from 1865 to1881.

Sport	1840-4	1845-9	1850-4	1855-9	1860-4	1865-9	1870-4	1875-80	Total
Archery	1	0	0	6	23	20	16	0	66
Athletics	7	0	1	2	4	16	29	54	113
Coursing	0	22	42	10	8	7	1	1	91
Cricket	1	22	24	7	56	181	271	356	918
Croquet						5	4	6	15
Cycling								3	3
Football	1	0	0	2	3	5	1	11	23
Horse Racing	46	24	28	25	39	50	34	37	283
Hunting	754	350	298	696	946	1030	1380	2181	7635
Hurling	10	3	7	21	11	5	2	3	62
Lawn Tennis								41	41
Rugby								20	20
Totals	820	421	400	769	1090	1319	1738	2713	9270

Patronage of sport for the lower classes had not existed in Tipperary since the eighteenth century, when barony hurling was one of the favourite gambling pastimes of the wealthy.[178] Cricket, a game initially played by military officers, professional and landed family members, had spread countywide by the 1870s. All the classes played the game at this time but a critical social divide had been crossed. This commenced around 1864 when cricket spread outwards and it was played among tenant farmers, artisans and farm labourers. A press report of 1873 indicated that cricket was seen as 'a republican game,' a game which was played by all the classes.[179] From this diffusion there commenced an appetite for sport among society outside of the estate wall which saw tenant farmers compete on the athletic field and start to organise themselves into football teams in the years prior to the founding of the GAA.

Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the various recreational sports which the owners and residents of country houses pursued as they sought to keep up with fashion in Great Britain and the rest of Ireland. That they did so with passion and fervour says much for the enthusiasm with which they undertook each particular pursuit. It said as much about their economic and class security as it did for the occasion itself. Occasions, like the hunt breakfast or evening ball, were not cheap and a certain degree of hosting was expected when one invited associates and friends to an 'at home' tennis party.

Archery, croquet and lawn tennis afforded ladies the opportunity to exercise, compete and flirt. What the women of Tipperary did was no different to that of their middle-class contemporaries in Scotland.[180] Here too, the attractions of archery, croquet and lawn tennis

[178] *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 8-12 July 1869; 24-27 Oct. 1770.
[179] *Nenagh Guardian*, 23 July 1873.
[180] Tranter. 'Organized sport and the middle-class woman,' p. 36.

gave a platform for ladies to compete in sport and this was not perceived as in any way unusual.

The community of the country house residents was a close knit social group. Many of the same family names and individuals appeared at two or more sports, demonstrating the capacity of this social group to reinvent itself as necessity dictated. From south of the county, Samuel Barton was an avid cricket supporter but he was also found at archery meetings. Similarly, Samuel Perry was involved with archery, cricket and the Suir Preservation Society. In the Ormond country of north Tipperary, Bassett Holmes was a dedicated yachtsman and official of the Lough Derg Yacht Club. He was also a committee member of the Ormond Tennis club.[181] That this occurred is neither strange nor unexpected. In a small community of a few hundred individuals social intercourse at recreational events was not only commonplace but expected. There was an onus to replicate what was happening in wider society and in this respect the owners of country houses and estates in Tipperary were not found wanting. The thesis has shown that there was enthusiastic support for the various sports as documented, though with varying levels of support, reflecting once more the county's north–south divide. This is a common theme running through this work. A regrettable feature of this analysis is that no evidence has come to light to explain why the community of Clonmel and its hinterland took so long to establish a lawn tennis club or even why there appeared to have been no move among the country house residents to promote the game socially as their contemporaries in Cashel and Nenagh did. In the last analysis it was down to individuals.

[181] *Nenagh Guardian*, 13 Aug. 1879.

Central to the success of country house sports was the interaction which the owners and residents of these houses and estates had with the military personnel stationed throughout the county. The military personnel were a key element in the local economy. For the country house and estate, military officers were, more often than not, the skilful opposition which their civilian contemporaries attempted to defeat. Sport was constantly evolving and it was the military officers who were to the fore in this respect. As is argued in Chapter Six, the military introduced the precursor of association football and rugby union into the county and by competing against the landed, professional and business classes of Tipperary they provided the necessary competitive impetus for these sports. Cricket was the first sport which effectively crossed the social divide. It gave the lower classes a taste for sport, which, as is demonstrated also in Chapter Six, resulted in an upsurge in the 1870s. This was the peak period for cricket in the history of Tipperary. Essentially, the other country house sports remained an exclusive pursuit for a minor proportion of the county's population. Cricket gave the lower classes a taste for competitive sport in a team format. Sports which followed later in the nineteenth century, such as hurling and the newly invented Gaelic football, were offshoots of the competitive element provided by playing cricket.

Victorian sport was constantly evolving. The degree to which this occurred in Tipperary is reflected in the way estate games came and went as one sporting innovation followed another. Archery, despite its initial success, its expensive social occasions and the attractions of its medieval connotations and insignia, was eclipsed as the lawn games of croquet and tennis became established. The sporting trends of fashionable London were replicated in rural Tipperary. Without regulatory bodies underpinning sport in Ireland, this state of flux continued. With the establishment of lawn tennis clubs in Lansdowne, Dublin University, Limerick, Monkstown and Fitzwilliam in 1877, and the establishment of an open lawn tennis

tournament in Limerick, also that year, the building blocks of a new sport were eventually put in place.[182] Though the Irish Lawn Tennis Championships were instituted in 1879, it was not until 1908 that the Irish Lawn Tennis Association was founded. The capacity of particular sports to establish themselves and survive was to some extent determined by the presence or absence of a regulatory body, as in cricket or horse racing. But without the support of local organisational structures, fundamentally based on the country house and estate lands, many of these sports would never have got off the ground in Tipperary. There were no urban masses in Tipperary to support the growth of sport. It took root and grew among a population that was predominantly rural, and especially among the social elite of the county. This was where these sports flourished, waxed and, in the case of archery and croquet waned.

[182] Higgins, *Irish tennis*, vol 1, p. 7.

Chapter 3: The Hunt Community

Introduction

Hunting to hounds as a recreational sport can be traced back to the eighteenth century in Tipperary when the Ormond Foxhounds were active in the field.[1] Marjorie Quarton has shown that fox hunting took place around Nenagh from 1738.[2] In February 1771 a 'sporting doe' was released at Bouladuff where 'a good ordinary and other accommodations' were available near the hunt grounds.[3] In May 1772, Redmond Everard advertised for sale 'thirteen couple of fox hounds, well entered and hunted, with six couple of whelps fit to enter.'[4] Everard lived near Thurles but it is unclear if he hunted his pack in an organised fashion.

This chapter explores the continued expansion of hunting to hounds from 1840-1880. There is no evidence to suggest that the hunting experience from 1840 was radically different from that which took place at the end of the eighteenth century. Hunting to hounds was not a necessity, but a purely recreational activity. It was something which the landed class and military officers liked to do during the winter months. As their passion for hunting increased so too did the number of hunt packs and the number of hunt meetings. This chapter shows that hunt packs met on a regular and formal basis throughout Tipperary in the same way as similar packs met throughout the rest of Ireland and Great Britain. Hunting, either after foxes, hares, and deer, pre-occupied many people over the winter months. Less frequently, in the summer months, otters were hunted. This chapter identifies where these packs were located. Also explored is the degree to which the packs were privately owned or the product of local

[1] Colin A. Lewis. *Hunting in Ireland: an historical and geographical analysis* (London, 1975), p. 67.
[2] Marjorie Quarton. *The North Tipperary foxhounds: hunting in north Tipperary over two centuries*. (Nenagh, 2010), p. 1, gives a date of 1738 for the foundation of the hunt.
[3] *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 16 Feb. 1771.
[4] *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 13 June 1772.

subscriptions. As has been outlined in the thesis introduction formal county boundaries were largely ignored in a sporting context and the distribution and patronage of hunt packs clearly illustrates this. A database of the dates and locations of the hunt meetings has been compiled. This allows for an understanding of how important the hunt was to those who followed it.[5] Financing the hunt was a regular concern for many huntsmen and in particular the master of each respective pack, especially those which were subscription packs. Where extant records have been identified these are used to assess the financial demands which the Office of Master of the Fox Hounds (MFH) brought to the incumbent.

In the overall context of this thesis this chapter demonstrates how influential Lord Waterford (with his estate at Curraghmore, Co. Waterford) and the 14th Earl of Huntingdon, (Master of the Ormond and King's County Hounds) were in promoting and supporting their respective hunting country. The support and financial backing which the Marquis of Waterford gave to the Tipperary Foxhounds was unequalled among the hunt community in Victorian Tipperary. The degree to which he established hunting lodges in south Tipperary and the continued additions to his kennel of dogs was testament to his love of hunting. In a sense, he was the first superstar of Tipperary sport. His presence at a hunt gathering or race meeting ensured that large fields of spectators and supporters were there to see him. He was extremely popular with upper class society. His supporters waved baby blue handkerchiefs when he appeared. This was his trademark colour.

The evidence presented in this chapter supports other findings in this thesis in that it was the landed and officer classes that were to the fore in the hunt community. There was never a season in the period under review when hunting did not take place. From the middle of the

[5] See Table 5, p. 124. The data has been compiled from local newspapers and the hunting journal of the 3rd Marquis of Waterford.

1860s there was an upsurge in hunting activity recorded in the local and national press. This was a trend which was also apparent with cricket. In fact, during the winter season of 1879-80, immediately prior to the onset of the Land War, the level of hunting peaked at 356 meetings. This was only the second time that this figure was recorded. The other occasion was the hunting season of 1876-77.

The thesis also argues that animal welfare was an issue of which the MFH was aware. The indiscriminate killing of foxes was anathema to the various masters and, while they pursued them as a means of recreation, it was the hard riding, the thrill of the chase and the camaraderie in the field which were important aspects of the hunt. The poisoning of hounds was an issue which could severely impact on a hunt pack and an issue with which the MFH had to contend. While foxes were perceived as vermin the loss of a hunt pack or several dogs impacted on the finances of the hunt community, no matter whether it was a private or a subscription pack.

The thesis argues that there was a socio-economic benefit from hunting to hounds in Tipperary. Coverts required maintenance and upkeep. Earth-stoppers were required to prevent foxes from going to ground early in the morning. A whole range of equine trades were required to maintain horse stock, ranging from veterinary expertise to harness and saddle makers. Suppliers of riding apparel advertised in the local press, as they also sought to bring added value to their business. In essence, while the hunting experience provided a sporting and social outlet for many families and individuals in the long winter months, there was an equine industry that was supported by it. It was an industry which relied on successful hunting to create sales and profits at a time of low agricultural output in the county.

General Overview of Hunting in Tipperary

This section gives a general overview of hunting to hounds in Co. Tipperary. It discusses the large number of hunt meetings which took place and the packs which were involved. Using quantitative data derived from the contemporary press, a yearly breakdown of hunt meets shows the progression and popularity of hunting during the 1860s and 1870s.

Fox hunting was practiced in neighbouring Co. Cork where the Duhallow foxhounds were active. This pack dated from 1745 making it the oldest hunt in Ireland. This predated the 'new style of fox hunting' in the 1750s by Hugo Meynell of the Quorn Hunt which set the pattern for other hunts to follow. The Duhallow hunt offers support for Iris Middleton's argument that structured fox hunting pre-dated the activities of Meynell at Quorn.[6] Indeed, much earlier than this is the example of Bishop Dopping of Meath, who maintained a private pack in 1697.[7] Around 1807 in south Tipperary, William Barton, of Grove, 'a descendant of an old Lancashire family from Barton, near Preston' kept a private pack of hounds. A family tradition maintained 'that the Barton pack was going strong even in the eighteenth century.'[8] A meet of the Tipperary Hunt which took place in 1823 was the subject of poetic verse fifty years later.[9]

Hunting to hounds in Tipperary took place under five categories - fox, hare, deer, otter and drag hunting. There is minimal evidence for the latter three when compared to that of fox or hare hunting. Fox hunting was undertaken countywide in Tipperary from 1840 to 1880

[6] Iris M. Middleton. 'The origins of English fox hunting and the myth of Hugo Meynell and the Quorn' in *Sport in History* Vol. 25, No. 1 (April 2005), p. 9.
[7] Muriel Bowen. *Irish hunting* (Tralee, 1954), p. 154.
[8] *British hunts and huntsmen.* (London, 1911), p. 516.
[9] *Nenagh Guardian*, 1 Jan. 1873.

(Figure 11). Hare hunting with harriers was more pronounced in the south of the county, especially around Cahir, Cashel and Tipperary.

Figure 11: Distribution of the main hunt packs in Co. Tipperary, 1840-1880

As is observed in the accompanying map, while hunt territory was jealously guarded there is some evidence to suggest that there was an element of crossover in mid-Tipperary. This was possibly due to the nature of the quarry hunted - a hare as opposed to a fox - and also the demise of some packs. Sometimes the scheduled date for a specific hunt pack coincided with that of another pack. This suggests that there were several locations from which hunt packs

would set out, though they were still within the same hunting country. It is likely that permission to hunt a hares on the country of a fox-hunting pack was given. If one was to prioritise the hunting hierarchy commencing with deer hunting, then foxes, hares, otters and drag hunting a criteria can be established on which to base this assertion. In mid-Tipperary hunt packs were not as large as the Tipperary Fox Hounds in south Tipperary. In the mid-Tipperary area there was a cross-over of different hunts across the period as various packs rose and fell depending on their interests and following.

However, it was not unusual for some harrier packs to hunt deer at irregular intervals during the season. It was a common feature of the hunting season for those who followed with the Barne Hounds. This pack regularly hunted deer in 1841.[10] Mr. Mansergh's hounds were also afforded the opportunity to hunt deer, as were the Clonmel Harriers, the Woodford Harriers and the Arravale Harriers.[11] The Ormond Hounds appeared, at times, unconcerned as to the type of quarry they hunted. In November 1856, they hunted a fox one day and when they met on the next occasion they hunted a hare. Hunting hares would not have been a popular choice with the true aficionados of fox hunting, though it was noted that the game was 'sufficiently plentiful.'[12]

Otters were principally hunted in and around Nenagh. Lieutenant Greene, one of the local military officers, took to the rivers around the town during the summer months of 1870 with his pack of otter hounds, as has been outlined in Chapter One.[13] Another visitor, Mr. Hill, brought his otter pack with him in the summer months of 1870 and 1871. His dogs were

[10] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 21 Mar. 1863.
[11] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 30 Nov. 1872; 19 Feb. 1873; 23 Dec. 1874; 31 Mar. 1877; 12 Mar. 1879.
[12] *Nenagh Guardian*, 3 Dec. 1856.
[13] *Nenagh Guardian*, 22 June 1870; 29 June 1870; 6 July 1870.

described as the best otter pack in Great Britain.[14] It is unknown who Mr. Hill was or indeed why he came to Tipperary with his otter hounds at this time. Contemporarily, in Wales, the Hon. Geoffrey Hill hunted his otter hounds from Maesllwch Castle, in Radnorshire. This was 'one of the most noted [otter] packs'.[15] The military at Fethard barracks were the only ones who followed a drag hunt. With drag hunting a pack of hounds followed a scent which was laid or dragged over a specific hunting country with defined start and terminal points. This could take place during the summer months where the drag would not interfere with crops as the course had been previously defined. It was also a means of keeping hounds exercised.

Deer, fox and hare hunting took place over the winter months when lands were fallow and grass and crops were not under threat of damage from horses. Notices appeared regularly in the press for huntsmen to take heed of newly sown crops. Apart from the fox hound packs it is difficult to identify which packs were followed by mounted followers, by people on foot, or both. The likelihood is that there was a prevalence of both styles for all meets. A meet of the Tipperary Fox Hounds in March 1873 attracted over sixty mounted followers 'and quite a cavalcade of fashionable equipages. Conspicuous amongst the four wheelers was the well-appointed drag of the Inniskilling Dragoons.'[16] When the Ormond Hunt met in December 1876, 'the crowd [was] so large on all sides that the foxes were headed by the people on foot, and did not break covert.'[17] This was in stark contrast to the Garrykennedy Harriers which had, in April 1877, an 'unusually small' attendance. The followers amounted to just 'five mounts with the two whips.'[18]

[14] *Nenagh Guardian*, 15 Apr. 1871.
[15] Rawdon B. Lee. *A history and description of the modern dogs of Great Britain and Ireland, sporting division: vol. 1.* (London, 1897), p. 166.
[16] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 22 Mar. 1873.
[17] *Nenagh Guardian*, 23 Dec. 1876.
[18] *Nenagh Guardian*, 7 Apr. 1877.

Table 5: Hunt packs in Co. Tipperary, 1840-1880

Name	Hunt seasons	Total meets
Archerstown Hounds	1843-44; 1846-48	10
Arravale Harriers	1867-68 - 1880-81	592
Ballintemple Blazers	1879-80	4
Ballyboy Harriers	1841-42 - 1842-43	69
Barne Hounds	1839-40 - 1856-57	157
Cahir Garrison Harriers	1846-47 - 1880-81	722
Cahir Hounds	1857-58	26
Cashel Rock Harriers	1850-51 - 1879-80	647
Castletown Harriers	1870-71	3
Clanwilliam Harriers	1841-42 & 1861-62	48
Clonmel Hounds	1857-58 - 1880-81	1144
Curraghmore Fox Hounds	1859-60 - 1879-80	63
Earl of Huntingdon Harriers	1876-77 - 1879-80	13
Fethard Garrison Drag Hounds	1873-74	11
Garrykennedy Harriers	1876-77	34
Greenane Hounds	1856-57 - 1861-62	161
Grove Hunt	1839-40	47
Kilkenny Hunt	1839-40; 1878-79	2
King's County Harriers	1867-68	1
Mr. Bennett's Hounds	1864-65 & 1866-67	20
Mr. Butler Lowe's Hounds	1843-44	1
Mr. Thos Connolly's Harriers	1868-69	1
Mr. Gason's Hounds	1865-66	4
Mr. Green's Otter Hounds	1870	5
Mr. Hill's Otter Hounds	1870	2
Mr. Jackson's Hounds	1865-66	1
Mr. Longworth's Hounds	1864-65	2
Mr. Mannings Hounds	1864-65	1
Mr. Mansergh Hounds	1866-67 - 1873-74	352
Mr. Parker's Beagles	1869-70	1
Mr. Parker's & Mr. Waller's Harriers	1868-69	1
Nenagh Harriers	1841-42; 1848-49; 1855-56	61
Ormond Hunt	1839-40 - 62-63; 1866-67-1880-81	1304
Redmonstown Harriers	1839-40 - 40-41	31
Redmonston Otter Hounds	1868	1
Slieveardagh Harriers	1852-53 - 1859-60	15
Templemore Beagles	1870-71	1
Templemore Garrison Hounds	1839-40; 1863-64; 1864-65	16
Thurles Harriers	1859-60 - 1860-61	29
Tinvane Hunt	1844-45 - 1849-50	8
Tipperary Fox Hounds	1839-40 - 1880-81	1759
White Hill Harriers	1867-68	4
Woodford Hounds	1874-75 - 1877-78	119
Youghal Harriers	1877-78	143
Total number of packs 44	Total number of meets	7636

From the winter hunting season of 1839-40 to that of 1880-81 forty-four separate hunt packs which were active in some part of the county have been identified. They were scheduled to meet cumulatively on 7,636 occasions (Table 5).[19] However, it is unknown how many of these meets were lost due to frost, adverse conditions, or cancellations for funerals.[20] Of the forty-four packs it is likely that twenty-seven were subscription packs, fourteen were maintained as private packs and three were maintained by the military.[21] Subscription packs were those which had a MFH responsible for maintaining the hunt country, the hounds and paying compensation for loss of fowl or property damage during the course of a hunting season. Members were required to pay subscription fees to the MFH to ensure that he would not be personally out of pocket due to the activities of the hunt club.

As is demonstrated later in this chapter, getting all members to pay their annual fees was easier said than done. Some packs were private and very ephemeral with little regard to publicity. Of the packs identified nine appeared in the press listings on a single occasion. These were private packs. When Thomas Connolly, a doctor from Castletown House, Co. Kildare came to stay with the Parkers, at Kilcooley Abbey, he brought with him a stud of horses and his pack of harriers 'to hunt alternatively with them and with the Tipperary Fox Hounds.'[22] There were eleven packs active in the 1870-71 and 1879-80 seasons. Ten packs operated in the county during 1868-69; 1876-77 and 1877-78. The five year period prior to the onset of the Land War was the most active period for hunting countywide. This is reinforced when the hunt dates, as recorded in the local press, are analysed. They show that

[19] This is a base line figure derived from hunt meet notifications in the contemporary press. As every issue of every paper has not been analysed the data from across the whole time frame is representative and can be seen to be a true reflection of hunting in Tipperary from 1840 to 1880.
[20] It was typical for meets to be cancelled when a relative of the MFH, or indeed the MFH himself died, as was the case with John Going, late MFH, Tipperary Hunt, in 1873. *Clonmel Chronicle*, 29 Oct. 1873.
[21] Due to the paucity of evidence for some packs it is difficult to quantify whether they were subscription packs or not.
[22] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 30 Dec. 1868.

one quarter of all scheduled meeting took place during this period. The total was 1,773 meets or 24.09 per cent.[23] What this evidence suggests is that opposition to the hunt in Tipperary was virtually non-existent in the years immediately preceding the Land War. This was to change once the land agitation commenced in 1881 and the followers of the hunt bore the brunt of it.[24] The Ormond Hunt 'continued to have trouble with the Land League' having only a few meetings in the period from 1882 to 1896.[25] By the autumn of 1882 calls were made to re-establish local hunts.[26]

During the Great Famine hunting to hounds continued though there were only seven active hunting packs at this time in the county. Their existence suggests a continuance of what had become a pattern from the eighteenth century with hunting concentrated in the autumn and winter months. One thing which greatly assisted the growth of fox hunting in particular was that foxes were not subject to the game laws, as they were considered vermin as distinct from game. The local press carried the names of those who held game licences. A prerequisite necessary to hold such a licence was that one needed to have an estate of 1,000 acres or an income of £100 or more annually to qualify.[27] Clearly this excluded all but the wealthy from holding such a licence. Foxhunting was outside of game licensing laws and tenant farmers could, if they desired, follow a hunt provided that they were members. The documentary evidence from the local press suggests that the season of 1851-52 was the one of least hunting activity (Figure 12). There were only two packs out in the field and they hunted for only nineteen days. The seasons of greatest activity were in 1876-77 and 1878-79, when there

[23] This tally does not allow for the highly probable non-recording of scheduled hunt meets in the preceding thirty five years in the local press. The data quantified for the whole period is that which has been derived from the regular hunt notices in the various local newspapers.
[24] For a detailed insight into the plan of campaign against the various hunt meets see Curtis Jr. 'Stopping the hunt,' pp 349-401; Dooley. *The decline of the big house*, pp 260-4.
[25] Quarton. *North Tipperary foxhounds*, p. 7.
[26] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 7 June 1882; 20 Sept. 1882.
[27] *Tipperary Free Press*, 18 Nov. 1854.

were 356 hunt meetings. Based on the documentary evidence, this heightened activity in 1876 also coincided with the peak period for cricket activity in the county, which is demonstrated in Chapter Six. In essence, this was all part of an annual sporting calendar of the landed gentry. When the hunting season ended the playing of cricket became one of their focal points for socialisation and entertainment.

During the 1870s reports of a sporting nature appeared with greater frequency in the local press. This can be seen when statistics for specific sports are compared against each other. A decline in hunting in the mid-1860s is explained by the non-appearance of the Ormond Hunt for three years owing to issues with local land agitation.[28]

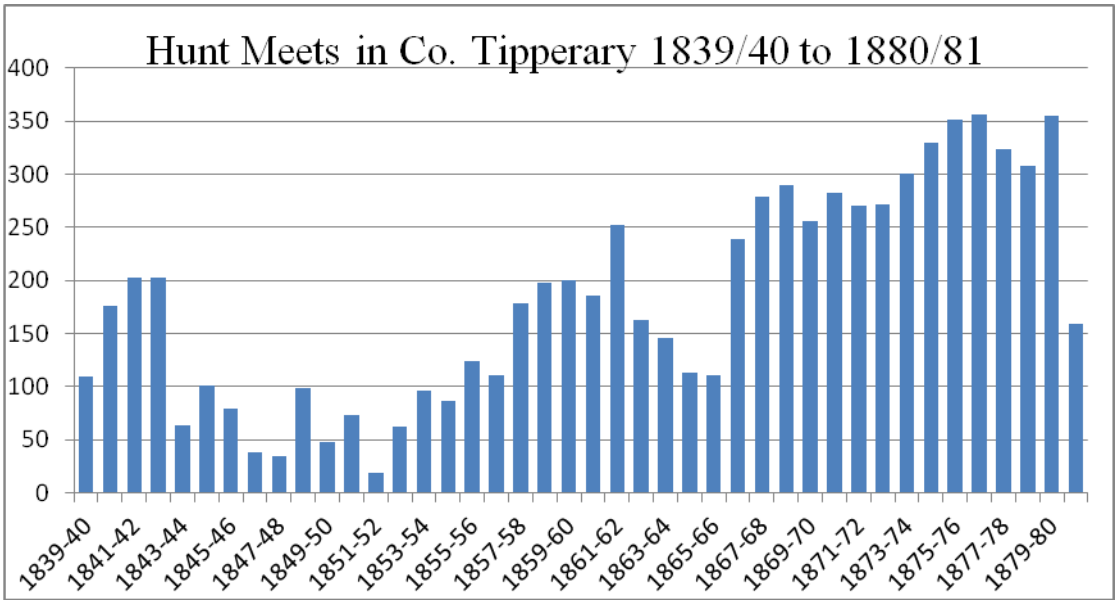

Figure 12: Number of hunt meets in Co. Tipperary, 1839/40 to 1880/81

Out of a total of 7,636 hunt meets recorded the day of the week on which hunt packs were out can be positively established for 7,634 days. This was indicative of the whole organisational

[28] Quarton, *North Tipperary foxhounds*, p. 3.

structure surrounding the hunt. It also demonstrated that there were many men and women, principally landowners, who had time on their hands which they could afford to give to hunting. The results show that the most popular hunting day was Monday. Wednesday was the least favoured day, as is shown in Table 6. No definitive reason is offered why Wednesday was not a good day for hunting. What is suggested here, based on the evidence of the other weekday totals, was that Wednesday was taken as a rest day to allow horses and hounds recover after a day in the field, especially when pack numbers were small and dogs were used two or three times a week.

Table 6: Day of week for hunt meets in Co. Tipperary, 1840-1880

Monday	1,695
Tuesday	1,570
Wednesday	371
Thursday	1,396
Friday	1,553
Saturday	1,049
Total	7,634

The three most prolific hunt packs in Tipperary were the Tipperary Fox Hounds (1,759), the Ormond Hunt, which was also joined with the Kings' County Hunt at various periods, (1,304) and the Clonmel Hounds/Harriers (1,144). These were the only hunt packs which met more than 1,000 times during the period of this thesis. Seven packs met less than 1,000 times, fifteen met less than 100 times, and fourteen met on less than ten occasions. Hunt meetings took place on each day of the week except Sunday.

Apart from the poisoning of Lord Waterford's hounds in 1842 (see below) the various hunt packs for the next thirty years suffered no interference or unrest. Even the construction and development of the railway network in the country from the mid-1840s was never a cause of

friction between the railway companies or the various hunt bodies. The range of hunting experiences varied and newspaper accounts of the various meets over the years told of 'brilliant runs', 'the run of the season' or a 'sporting day' as self-styled hunt reporters 'Larky Grigg' and 'Tally Ho' wrote bi-weekly accounts of hunt meets. Indeed, a claim could be made that 'Larky Grigg' was the first dedicated sports reporter in Tipperary, such was the volume and regularity of his columns 'from our special correspondent' in the *Clonmel Chronicle*.[29]

The evidence from the press also suggests that hunting to hounds meant different things to different people and that the various classes derived their own benefits from hunting. For the labouring class they got a spectacle, a form of spectator sport which added colour and excitement to what was often a humdrum and difficult existence. For the participants they had the thrill of the chase, a social occasion and an opportunity to meet their contemporaries during the long winter months. In an account of a run by the Ormond Hunt, on 23 February 1872, it was remarked that 'the countrymen who witnessed the run were highly delighted, and gave every assistance...several rushed up to the master begging him to come to Old Court soon again, as there were two more foxes to be had there, and declaring they had never saw such a hunt in their lives before.'[30] But this was to change. In March 1874 when a covert at Dangan was burned it prompted some members of the Tipperary Hunt to offer a reward for information which would lead to the identity of the culprits.[31]

[29] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 5 Mar. 1879; 2 Apr. 1879; 12 Apr. 1879; 3 Dec. 1879. Attempts to identify the identity and residential area of this man have proved fruitless. He was very close to the Hunt, and a likely participant, an early version of a public relations officer for the MFH, or pack owner. In 1897 he was contributing articles on the Tipperary Hounds to the *Clonmel Nationalist*, a rival paper in political outlook to the *Clonmel Chronicle*. *Clonmel Nationalist*, 8 Sept. 1897.
[30] *Nenagh Guardian*, 28 Feb. 1872.
[31] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 1 Apr. 1874.

The organisation and structure of hunt meetings was clearly characterised in the way they were advertised. Each hunt, especially the larger packs, had a strong organisational ethos. This was very clear with the Tipperary Fox Hounds as dates, times and place of meetings were scheduled well in advance, with notifications sent to the local press. Not alone did this add to the consistency of the season, it added reliability in terms of the successful running of the hunt.

This section has looked at the growth of hunting to hounds throughout Co. Tipperary. It has shown that fox and hare hunting were the most popular and that three hunt packs were very active during this period. It has set the scene from which to explore further some of the key personnel who were instrumental in promoting and sustaining hunting. These are looked at in great detail in the next section.

Henry de la Poer Beresford, 3rd Marquis of Waterford

This section looks at the brief but influential interaction which the 3rd Marquis of Waterford had with the Tipperary Hunt. It demonstrates the extent to which he fostered his passion for fox hunting. His stay in the county was short lived, as external forces undermined his willingness to support a hunt country which became aggressive towards him.

Henry de La Poer Beresford, 3rd Marquis of Waterford, with his estate at Curraghmore, Co. Waterford, was instrumental in enlarging the Tipperary Hunt in June 1840. Noted for 'painting the town red in Melton Mowbray' in 1837, Lord Waterford was a passionate and regular supporter of fox hunting (Figure 13). The Grove Hunt had been hunting south Tipperary since the start of the century but when the Marquis 'expressed his intention of

establishing a kennel or two…in this neighbourhood' the Grove was amalgamated into the new Tipperary Hunt.[32]

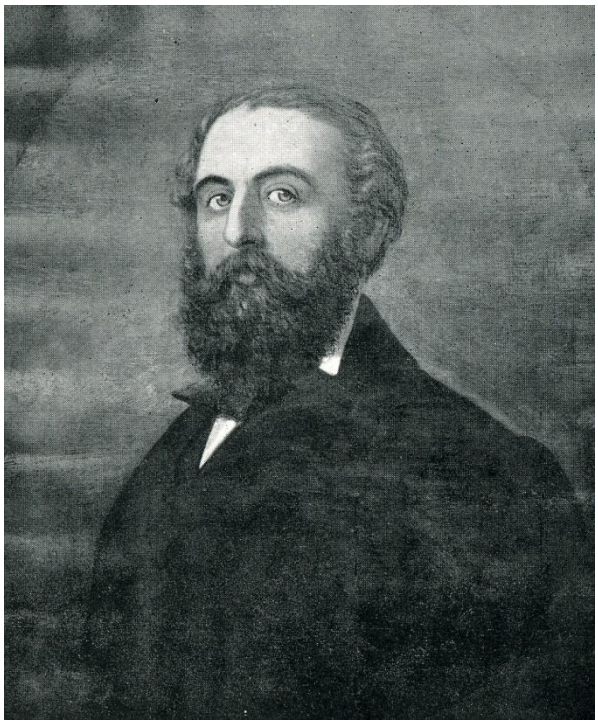

Figure 13: Henry de la Poer Beresford, 3rd Marquis of Waterford
(Source: Hunting Diary of the 3rd Marquis.)

At the commencement of the 1840-41 hunting season the pack moved to the Marquis' hunting lodge at Rockwell. The nearby village of New Melton Mowbray was 'splendidly illuminated and bonfires blazed in every direction to welcome the "Tips"'.[33] The logistics of running, resting and moving fox hounds around south Tipperary was a feat in itself, but Lord Waterford ensured its success by having in place separate hunt packs which were alternated around the county. In April 1841, the Marquis travelled to England to enhance his hunting interests where he purchased a further twenty-five couples of fox hounds. This raised the compliment of hounds in his possession to three packs.[34] This new stock, from 'Mr.

[32] *Tipperary Free Press*, 6 June 1840.
[33] *Tipperary Free Press*, 24 Oct. 1840. This village is New Inn, and it appears on the 1840 Ordnance Survey map under this name.
[34] *Tipperary Free Press*, 10 Apr. 1841.

Villebois' Hampshire kennels and Lord Lonsdale's "Border Hounds",' added to the strength of the Marquis' pack and his ability to hunt at even greater regularity.[35]

In 1842, he married Louisa Stuart, daughter of the 1st Baron Stuart de Rothsay and they settled in Curraghmore House, Co. Waterford.[36] At the outset, the Tipperary Hunt met three days a week. However, by February 1842, the hunt was out four days a week. This was aided by the purchase of an additional pack of hounds in August 1842. They were kennelled in Rockwell.[37] Altogether, there were seventy-five couple of hounds kennelled and ninety horses stabled at Rockwell. The hounds were taken back to Curraghmore at the end of each hunting season.[38]

Yet, in spite of the resources and money spent on supporting and building up the Tipperary Hunt in its formative years, the largesse of the Marquis was not without its detractors. Committed as he was to hunting in Tipperary his beloved hounds received a serious setback when several of them were poisoned at Dangan covert on 29 December 1842.[39] This act provoked widespread indignation and revulsion among the hunting community and landowners at large. An address in the name of over 300 gentlemen, military officers, farmers and Roman Catholic clergy in support of the sporting interests of the Marquis was published in the local press.[40] Lord Waterford subsequently moved his hunting establishment to Lakefield, Fethard, but apparent malicious intent was to follow him there also. In October 1843 his stable block was subjected to an arson attack. The nationalist *Tipperary Free Press*

[35] *British hunts and huntsmen*, p. 518.
[36] Watson. *Between the flags*, p. 51.
[37] *Tipperary Free Press*, 6 Aug. 1842.
[38] *Tipperary Free Press*, 19 Apr. 1843. Michael MacEwan. *Tipperary: the people the horses the hounds.* (Dublin, 2003), p. 14.
[39] *Tipperary Free Press*, 8 Jan. 1842.
[40] *Tipperary Free Press*, 26 Jan. 1842.

openly stated that Waterford 'oppressed no one – expelled no one – insulted no one. Wherefore then should he be molested?'[41] The paper did infer that there was some local hostility to his employment of Carrick-on-Suir or Curraghmore tradesmen at Lakefield in preference to Fethard tradesmen. The *Tipperary Free Press* did not elaborate if this was the reason behind the fire. However, Lord Waterford had had enough. In an open letter 'to the gentlemen of county Tipperary' he outlined his reasons for abandoning fox hunting in Tipperary, 'feeling that such a system of annoyance more than counterbalanced the pleasures of fox hunting for which I alone proposed to reside at Lakefield.'[42] His tenure in Tipperary was brief but his legacy was lengthy. The Mastership of the hunt was transferred to James Millet. The Marquis placed one pack of his own hounds at the hunt's disposal when he departed the Tipperary hunting scene.

In the 1843-44 season, a subscription of £600 was entered into for the management of the Tipperary Hunt for the first time in its history.[43] This was a large sum of money for the Hunt to raise mindful that thirty years later the subscription fee was £700.[44] It was an indication of the level of support which the hunt community enjoyed in the pre-Famine period. Subscription packs were a feature of fox hunting in England from the late eighteenth century. In 1798, George Baker, of Elmore Hall, took on the duties of MFH of the Durham County Hounds for 'an annual subscription of 800 guineas'.[45] David Itzkowitz has observed that by 1820 hunting countries had taken on some form of 'rudimentary organisation' which was then left to 'interested sportsmen to see what arrangements could be made for the future'

[41] *Tipperary Free Press*, 1 Nov. 1843
[42] *Tipperary Free Press*, 11 Nov. 1843.
[43] *Tipperary Free Press*, 8 Nov. 1843.
[44] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 8 May 1872.
[45] David C. Itzkowitz. *Peculiar privilege: a social history of English foxhunting 1753-1885* (Hassocks, 1977), p. 76.

success of the hunt.[46] The transfer of the hounds from Lord Waterford to Millet was an early example of a subscription pack in Tipperary, similar to those in existence in England where retiring masters were replaced by a committee. This happened with the Albrighton Hunt in 1830.[47]

Those who followed and subscribed to the hunt were men who could afford it. They had time and money to indulge their winter passion for the hunt. 'Old Whip', a letter writer to the *Nenagh Guardian* in March 1844 summed it up quite simply. Taking offence at the contents of a prior letter published in that paper, 'Old Whip' noted that 'grocers, taylors (*sic*), etc' and other business people in Nenagh 'have more sense than to lose their time in such idle pursuits; all the persons I could see at the hunt that day…have sufficient property to support them independently.'[48] Hunting to hounds was a socially elite pastime which the propertied class could indulge in principally because they wanted to and they could afford to. Hunting was more than simply paying a subscription fee, it was an entrée to a sporting and social life where gentlemen could socialise exclusively around the hunt.[49]

People wished to hunt with the Marquis as it gave them celebrity association. It was noted when the Tipperary hounds met near Cahir in November 1842 that there was 'seldom witnessed a more numerous field of sportsmen.'[50] Similarly in March 1863, when the Marquis' Curraghmore hounds hunted with the Tipperary hounds in Fethard, 'all the fashion and beauty of the surrounding counties Kildare, Limerick, Kilkenny, Waterford and Tipperary were well represented. There were a great number of ladies on horseback and from

[46] Itzkowitz. *Peculiar privilege*, p. 77.
[47] Itzkowitz. *Peculiar privilege*, p. 77.
[48] *Nenagh Guardian*, 30 Mar. 1844.
[49] Itzkowitz. *Peculiar privilege*, p. 31.
[50] *Nenagh Guardian*, 5 Nov. 1842.

about 300 to 400 gentlemen in pink and other colours.'[51] The appearance of many people was due in no small part to the participation of the Marquis. The presence of such a large gathering was one of emulation and it epitomized hunting as one of those 'socially representative events carried out within the landed class.'[52]

This section has looked at the role of the Marquis of Waterford in establishing the Tipperary Hunt on a basis which, as subsequent events demonstrate, was outside the scope of other hunt personnel to copy let alone emulate. His financial strength and willingness to provide hounds, horses and a kennel were key ingredients in establishing a hunt which was strong in all of its essential components. But when he departed for Curraghmore a subscription hunt was established, one which would now rely on its members to keep it sustained.

Horse Stock for Hunting

This section looks at one of the key factors of a good hunt, the quality of its horses. While not all hunt communities provided horses for each participant some, such as the Ormond Hunt and the Tipperary Hunt, did keep stables for members. This was required when hunt meetings were frequent and horses needed rest. It also looks at the role of the tenant farmer in providing horses and the financial rewards which he could make from the sale of a good horse. Central to this was good breeding. An overview of stallion stations is used to demonstrate the level of organisational skill which owners required as they sought to generate income.

[51] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 21 Mar. 1863.
[52] Nicola Drücker. 'Hunting and shooting: leisure, social networking and social complications' in Terence McDonough (ed.) *Was Ireland a colony? Economics, politics and culture in nineteenth-century Ireland.* (Dublin, 2005), p. 126.

While the various hunts were self-regulated and subscribed it was important that they maintained the support of local tenant farmers as hunts were alert to the need for good community relations. The committee of the Tipperary Hunt, for example, were ever vigilant in this respect and cognisant of the need to keep the tenant farmers on side. At their meeting in May 1864 it was observed that

> keeping a pack of fox hounds was of great service to a county, in improving the breed of horses so greatly sought after, and in affording an inducement for the gentry to remain at home where sport can be had, and spend their money in this country instead of becoming *absentees*…[and] give every encouragement to their tenantry to support the fox hounds as the best means of promoting an improved breed of horses.[53]

Meet advertisements in the press gave members ample notice not to cross over newly laid fields, young wheat, or clover.[54] Furthermore, fowl money (compensation) was regularly paid out to those tenant farmers that claimed for losses to chicken flocks on account of foxes.[55]

In England during most of the nineteenth century 'an average hunter cost around £75 to £150, and £300 to £400 was generally considered a high price.'[56] For the Marquis of Waterford much of his hunting expense was recouped at his annual stud sales, though prices varied considerably. In 1856 he sold seventy horses ranging in price from £400 at the top end down to £7 for a yearling. Geldings, fillies, yearlings and brood mares were knocked down at less than £30 each. The racing stock commanded better prices.[57] However, the Marquis was tragically killed while returning home after a successful day in the field in March 1859.[58] His 'extensive and celebrated stud' came under the hammer the following June with potential

[53] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 7 May 1864.
[54] *Nenagh Guardian*, 5 Dec. 1849; 13 Dec. 1868.
[55] *Nenagh Guardian*, 25 Apr. 1874.
[56] Itzkowitz. *Peculiar privilege*, p. 32.
[57] *Tipperary Free Press*, 24 Oct. 1856. The following year also saw sale prices in much the same range bracket *Tipperary Free Press*, 30 Oct. 1857.
[58] *Tipperary Free Press*, 1 Apr. 1859.

buyers from all parts of Ireland, England, and France in attendance.[59] This was indicative of his status and the quality of the horses which were at his disposal. Once more prices varied greatly, especially for the racehorses. The hunting stock was knocked down at high figures. Of this stock, fourteen hunters sold for £100 or more. The top price for one the horses came in at £300. Fifteen horses were sold for less than £100. The cheapest horse sold for £30. The sale also saw twenty-nine couple of hounds sold. Fifteen couples realised £76 3*s* and fourteen couples were sold for £55.[60] Another example of the sort of money which was generated from horse sales was that made by John Going, MFH. He sold one of his horses at the Punchestown races where he received '£250 for a four-year-old horse untried, except to fox hunting.'[61]

Farmers also bred horses. These were often offered for sale to various members of the hunting community. One hunter which the Marquis of Waterford purchased for £35 from a tenant farmer was subsequently sold for £200.[62] The local press also noted that it was good business for farmers to breed horses and maintain the hunting stock as there would always be a market. In late 1869, P. Quinlan sold a 'weight-carrying hunter to Capt. Craige, of Edinburgh for £100.'[63] Horses were central to hunting and with a demand for hunters it spawned a thriving local industry in breeding. Newspapers regularly carried advertisements as to where celebrated stallions would stand during a particular year. It was not uncommon for stallions to stand at several different locations during any given week. John Bennett, Oldtown, Templemore ran his own pack of hounds from 1865 to 1867. His stallion *Fingall* stood for the 1871 season. The stallion was limited to covering sixty mares. His stallion

[59] *Tipperary Free Press*, 28 June 1859.
[60] *Tipperary Examiner*, 29 June 1859.
[61] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 29 Apr. 1865.
[62] *Tipperary Examiner*, 29 June 1859.
[63] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 11 Dec. 1869.

served gentlemen's mares for £2 10s and farmers mares for one pound less.[64] The fee for a thoroughbred mare was four guineas, with five shillings charged for the groom. Half bred mares were serviced for half this price and the groom's fees were also halved. Working farmer's horses stood for one and half guineas, with half a crown going to the groom. Similar fees and standing arrangements in many areas of Tipperary were widely advertised in the press.[65] This laid a sound foundation for a growing horse racing industry as demands for thoroughbreds and hunters gave many farmers and stallion owners an opportunity to expand their own income by way of stud fees or the subsequent sale of a horse.

However, a difficulty with inferring too much about farmer involvement from these press advertisements is that no evidence has been identified to indicate who actually brought mares to these stallions. Neither is it known for what purposes were the foals used. The social status of the people who brought their mares to the stallions might have impacted on the desired use of the subsequent foals. Farmers bred horses for use on the farm as much as huntsmen bred them for hunting. What is clear is that there was a demand for stallion services and this need underpinned agricultural, hunting and racing needs to a degree which is, as of yet, undetermined.

The sheer volume of hunt meetings ensured that there was always a demand for horses in Tipperary. This section has shown how some farmers and stallion owners used this demand to make extra money outside of the hunting season. There was also the chance that a horse well ridden in the field would catch the eye of likely purchasers. They were several means by

[64] *Nenagh Guardian*, 3 May 1871.
[65] For instance *Tipple Cider* stood at Clonmel and Carrick-on-Suir in 1855, *Tipperary Free Press*, 14 Apr. 1855; and at the Glengall Arms stables, Cahir, in 1856, at a rate of £2 10s for gentlemen and gentlemen farmer mares. Farmers who held not more than twenty acres were charged £1 10s, with it being noted that the horse was 'purchased from Baron Rothschild in England'. *Tipperary Free Press*, 26 Feb. 1856.

which diligent men could prosper from the hunt community and those that did were regularly and handsomely rewarded.

Financing the Hunt

This section looks at how the hunt committees were financed, particularly the subscription packs. As noted earlier, several packs were privately maintained and the financial responsibility was the lot of the pack owner. The subscription hunts relied on members paying a fee towards the maintenance of the pack and associated costs. The fees were not uniform. The two main subscription fox hunting packs in the county were the Tipperary Fox Hounds and the Ormond Hunt. It is these two packs which are scrutinised in greater detail.

When compared with contemporary hunt clubs in England, as with other aspects of sport and recreation in Tipperary, there was no new money or industrialists behind hunt committees. Reports of hunt club meetings in Tipperary which appeared in the press show that all the leading positions were filled by landowners. These were regularly deputy lieutenants, justices of the peace or in the case of Lord Waterford, a Marquis. But financing a hunt did not come cheaply. Delmé Radcliffe, Master of the Hertfordshire Hounds was advised that 'you will never have your hand out of your pocket, and must always have a guinea in it.'[66] For a calendar year in the late 1830s Delmé Radcliffe estimated that the costs for an establishment of twelve horses and fifty couples of hounds was £1,885 11*s* 0*d*.[67] For the various hunt clubs in Tipperary their expenditure never came to such a high figure.

[66] F.P. Delmé Radcliffe. *The noble science: a few general ideas on fox-hunting, for the use of the rising generation of sportsmen, and more especially those of the Hertfordshire Hunt Club*. (London, 1839), p. 283.
[67] Delmé Radcliffe. *The noble science*, p. 285.

A problem with insufficient finance was always to the fore when the Tipperary Hunt club met for their end of season review. In May 1863 it was stated at a meeting of the club that an outlay of £700 was required to maintain the hunt in a normal year. However, rarely had income reached £400.[68] It left a shortfall and this fell to the master, John Going, to cover. John Going (1822-1873), based at Wilford, was the head of one branch of the extended Going family which had residences at various locations around Co. Tipperary.[69] The Going lineage descended from Robert Going, of Cranagh whose 'will was proved in 1732'.[70] The fact that the two county representatives in Parliament were not on the list of subscribers to the Tipperary Hunt was deemed regrettable on account that the members refused 'to support their county hounds.' It was further stated, that the neighbouring master of Curraghmore Foxhounds, in Co. Waterford received from 'his small constituency £700 and is supplied with horses and every requirement necessary.' John Going, at times, did not have an easy tenure as Master of the Tipperary Foxhounds as constant financial concerns about the levels of subscriptions and the viability of the hunt were always a concern.

A continued shortfall in subscription fees tested his patience. In October 1871, at another meeting of the Tipperary Hunt Club, Mr. W. Burges acknowledged the important role of John Going, though it was at a 'great pecuniary loss to himself as master.'[71] This was a recurrent theme as in 1872 Going himself commented that he had 'suffered considerable pecuniary loss from keeping up the hounds, especially through the famine years from 1848 to 1852, when I did not receive as much as actually paid the men's wages.'[72] Going had assumed the

[68] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 13 May 1863.
[69] Bernard Burke. *A genealogical and heraldic history of the landed gentry of Ireland* (London, 1912), p. 270. Rev. C.C. Ellison. 'Going of Munster' in *The Irish Ancestor*, Vol. IX, No. 1, 1977, p. 31.
[70] Burke. *Landed gentry*, p. 269.
[71] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 25 Oct. 1871.
[72] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 8 June 1872.

Mastership of the Tipperary Hunt in 1846.[73] Total outlay for the 1863-64 season was £487 17s 6d. This represented a saving of £162 on the previous year 'owing to the economical management of the hounds and the reduction in the price of fodder' mindful that there was not one blank day in the season.[74] It was no small co-incidence that one of the members claimed that they had 'better sport for less money.' But the savings were not to last! At a subsequent meeting of the Tipperary Hunt in May 1872 the accounts, when presented, showed that by the end of season 1871-72 the total expenditure was £796 13*s* 10*d*. This represented an increase of over £300 on the returns of 1863-64. Table 7 outlines the receipts for the season.

Table 7: Income for Tipperary Foxhounds, 1871-72 (*Clonmel Chronicle*, 8 May 1872)

Subscriptions for 1871	£543 5s 0d
Field money	£164 19s 9d
Manure at kennel	£ 8 0s 0d
Total receipts	£716 4s 9d

A shortfall in subscriptions for the 1871-72 season meant that, yet again, Going had to contribute from his own funds to meet the expenses. Though subscriptions were up by £21 10*s* on the 1870-71 season the expenditure was also up. This was primarily due to an increase in the prices for oats and wages. The club proposed to raise the subscription to £700 so that they could retain the services of Going as master or 'resign all hope of the future hunting of the country'.[75] The reality was that the members of the Tipperary Hunt had little onus on them to ensure that the hunt survived, apart from paying their subscriptions. This was something which did not go unnoticed. At that same meeting, Captain Moore commented that

[73] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 14 Mar. 1866.
[74] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 7 May 1864.
[75] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 8 May 1872.

'Tipperary ought to be ashamed of some of the subscriptions...they are so small. In England the least sum to constitute a person a member of a hunt is £10.' At another meeting in June the increased subscription fees of seven members was outlined to the meeting. Those who increased their subscriptions in 1872 are represented in Table 8. Sixteen new subscribers for 1872 are represented in Table 9.[76]

Table 8: Members who increased subscriptions to Tipperary Hunt, June 1872. (*Clonmel Chronicle*, 8 June 1872**)**

Name	Occupation	Sub. for 1871	Sub. for 1872
S.H. Barton	Estate owner (5,119a)	£25	£30
William Burges	Unknown	£20	£25
Lockyer Burges	Unknown	£20	£25
James Chadwick	Land owner (356a)	£10	£15
William Ryall	Land owner/farmer (87a)	£5	£15
Samuel Perry	Estate owner (2,768a)	£10	£15
Richard Grubb	Land owner (635a)	£5	£7

Table 9: New subscribers to Tipperary Hunt, June 1872. (*Clonmel Chronicle*, 8 June 1872)

Name	Occupation	Subscription for 1872
Richard Smith, Cahir	Mill Owner	£2
Edward Grubb	Milling	£5
John Cooney	Business	£5
R.W. White	Land owner (666a)	£3
Rickard Wall (for his servants)	Land owner (376a)	£5
John Shee	Land owner/farmer (29a)	£3
Benjamin Going	Business	£5
William Hunt	Unknown	£5
Charles Clibborn	Unknown	£5
Captain Milman	Military	£5
Patrick Guiry	Unknown	£5
John N. Langley	Estate owner (1,724a)	£5
James Quinlan	Unknown	£2
Patrick Walshe, Glenbower	Tenant Farmer	£2
James O'Connell	Unknown	£2 2s.
A. Frend	Landowning father (100a)	£1

[76] Details of land holdings are sourced from *Return of owners of land of one acre and upwards, in the several counties, counties of cities, and counties of towns in Ireland* (Dublin, 1876). Geoffrey Watkins Grubb. *The Grubbs of Tipperary: studies in heredity and character* (Cork, 1972), p. 115.

The small sum of £182 1*s* was subscribed, with £700 eventually promised in subscriptions. Patrick Walshe, a new tenant-farmer member, outlined his reasons for subscribing. He stated that what led him to contribute was a 'desire to keep up the fine old sport of fox-hunting as a means of keeping the country gentry around them. If they did not remain at home the farmers could not live.'[77] This sense of attachment reflected the ties which bound landlord and tenant farmer.

Though the land was owned by various landlords they also required the support of the tenant farmers to indulge their fox-hunting passions. Accounts of the various meets, however biased in favour of the hunt, regularly reported that farmers and country people were supportive of the hunt. The interaction between the tenant farmers and the lower classes with the hunting community mirrored that of England.[78] In Walshe's case, by subscribing to the hunt he raised his own social status. Though he would have had no choice about who hunted over his rented land, as the hunting rights belonged to his landlord, his support would not have gone unnoticed. Essentially, every member of the local community knew their place and accepted their status. But, by supporting the hunt by whatever means, each member of society, from the landlord to the peasant, was ensuring a strong unified countryside alliance. In Tipperary there was no threat from an emerging industry or large metropolitan area to undermine the rural nature of the county. Rather, what undermined the whole countryside alliance of the hunt was the Land War. This ripped apart the whole fabric which united landlord and tenant, master and servant. It ultimately led to the collapse of the hunt as the 'peculiar privilege' of hunting over a farmer's tenanted lands was for the most part denied to the hunt. The erection

[77] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 8 June 1872.
[78] Itzkowitz, *Peculiar privilege*, pp 23-9.

of wire fences, the burning of coverts or general disruption to the organisation of the hunt community all had a negative impact.[79]

Yet financial constraints were a constant threat to the Tipperary Foxhounds. At a meeting of the hunt in May 1873 several contentious issues arose.[80] The meeting was informed that the 7th Dragoon Guards, based at Cahir barracks, could hunt cheaper with the Waterford Foxhounds than with the Tipperary hounds. The garrison regularly kept a pack of harriers which ran in the name of the regiment stationed there. Officers hunted with the foxhounds on days when the harriers were in the kennels. Having resigned from the Mastership of the hunt owing to ill health, John Going offered the hounds to his successor on condition that he 'hunt this country as it has been hunted, and that he will keep up pure blood in the kennel...should the hounds be given up now, or at any future time...I claim them as my property.' The difficulty now lay in getting a new master.

At a meeting of the Tipperary Hunt Club in Clonmel no successor was willing to come forward and it was decided 'to have the pack advertised in the *Irish Sportsman, The Field, Bell's Life* and the local papers.'[81] The social cachet of being MFH was not enough to initially attract a prompt response to the vacancy. Promised subscription fees were expected to amount to £700. This left a shortfall of £40, of which £20 was a bad debt. The non-payment of subscription fees, it was felt, was the main stumbling block why gentlemen would not offer their candidacy for the office of Master. The difference between the more affluent hunt clubs in England and those aspiring to that status was clearly outlined by Captain Moore who informed the meeting that 'that in England gentlemen of large means are anxious to

[79] Curtis Jr. 'Stopping the hunt,' pp 349-401.
[80] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 7 May 1873.
[81] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 7 June 1873.

come over to hunt the pack for the season in each year ... the hunting we have now would be very different from what it would be if £8,000 or £10,000 per year English money were spent...carrying on the hunting on a scale that we could never attempt.'[82] In spite of this tantalising scenario Moore added that 'the general rumour is the farmers will not tolerate anyone in charge of the hounds save a local gentleman.' This ultimately fell back on the Going family. It was stated that the farmers were anxious that the hounds remain in the hands of a member of the Going family, a resolution seconded by John Hanrahan, a tenant farmer from Nine-mile-house. Hanrahan commented that his family were 'well aware of our obligations to the Going family.' After much discussion Benjamin Going offered to take the hounds for one year if no suitable gentleman could be found to take them after they were advertised for sale.

At a subsequent meeting on the matter a letter enquiring about the vacant position of master, from William Sergar, Colchester, was read out to the members. Sergar argued that £600 was inadequate to hunt the country as in England this would cost £12,000. To take up the position he required a guarantee of £1,000 'to do the business in a handsome, workmanlike manner.'[83] The influential opinion of Lord Donoughmore appeared to have swayed the day as he said 'he would not like to see Tipperary hunted by extraneous aid.' It was to prove a critical intervention, one which may have ultimately saved the Tipperary Hunt from collapse. In England the increasing numbers of outsiders attracted to the various hunts, coupled with decreasing tenancies, meant that farmers were not supporting the hunt as they used to.[84] All indications were that the same would happen in Tipperary. Once more attentions turned towards Benjamin Going. He subsequently agreed to take over the pack for one year,

[82] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 7 June 1873.
[83] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 5 June 1875.
[84] Richard Holt. *Sport and the British: a modern history* (Oxford, 1989), p. 53.

provided that the coverts were attended to. The issue here was one of scale. If the Tipperary Hunt was going to attract the best master then a basic requirement was that all members should pay their subscriptions on time and honour a commitment made to him. Clearly, this was not happening with some members. Sergar was not too demanding in seeking basic requirements to finance the hunt.[85] It was something which the members failed to grasp completely, irrespective of their desire to have the pack remain in the hands of the Going family. The fact that no member was willing to come forward as Master demonstrated that the financial strength was not there for the hunt to exist long term if the issue surrounding the Mastership was not resolved.

Subsequently, true to his promise, Benjamin Going gave up the hunt in April 1875. A new Master was once again sought, one who would hunt the country two days per week.[86] A new Master, Mr. Bellamy, Blackheath, Kent was appointed in June 1877 with a guarantee of £700 in subscription fees. For this figure he would 'supply horse, saddles, etc., pay for the kennel and afford good sport.'[87] His tenure was brief as in March 1878 Captain MacNaughten was elected the new Master. His term of office commenced on 1 May.[88]

Problems with payment of annual subscription fees to the Tipperary Hunt were also replicated with the Ormond Hunt. In 1868 James N. Atkinson paid £5 subscription to Captain Saunders. Atkinson hoped for good hunting as the country was 'well stocked with foxes this summer by Welsh, getting about forty from [the] Kerry mountains'.[89] Welsh, who was the

[85] Itzkowitz has outlined the fees incurred by four hunt packs in England in the mid 1870s, with the Meynell costing just over £3,889 at the top end and at the bottom of the four, the Braes of Derwent having fees of just over £253. Itzkowitz, *Peculiar privilege,* p. 79.
[86] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 1 May 1875.
[87] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 9 June 1877.
[88] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 6 Mar. 1878.
[89] 'The chronicles of Ashley Park commenced A.D. 1866 by James N. Atkinson'. Entry for 1 November 1867.

Master in 1867, made a present of them to the Club not wishing to keep them any longer. No one would accept the Mastership and a committee of management were formed. A nominal master, secretary and treasurer were appointed to carry on the business. Captain Saunders was appointed the interim Master. Captain Stoney gave a kennel at Kyle Park and accommodation for horses, huntsman and helpers near his house. Denis Crane was retained as huntsman for £50 for the six months ending 1 May 1868. A groom appointed to mind his horses received ten shillings per week, the kennel man received seven shillings per week, and the earth warner (M. Kennedy) received five shillings per week.[90]

Though there was a prestige associated with the position of Master the recurring theme of 'pecuniary loss' was also heard in Ormond country. In February 1872 a meeting of the Ormond Hunt was held to discuss the appointment of a new Master. George Jackson had resigned from the position. Jackson explained that it was his opinion that 'the Mastership involved pecuniary loss to every gentleman who had ever filled the post.'[91] It was a problem in Tipperary which was not easily resolved, irrespective of the amount of guaranteed subscriptions the respective hunts received. Lord Hastings, Kings Co. Hunt, was appointed Master and he stated that all he required from the members were foxes. He would supply horses, hounds and men and hunt two days per week, provided he was guaranteed £200 in May and £200 in January. This guarantee he received from three unnamed members.[92] But to achieve this fee an increase in subscription rates to the Hunt was necessary. When initially informed of Hastings demands, Andrew Crawford stated that 'the Ormonds never subscribed

[90] 'The chronicles of Ashley Park,' entry dated 1 November 1867.
[91] *Nenagh Guardian*, 7 Feb. 1872.
[92] *Nenagh Guardian*, 6 Mar. 1872.

£400 a year,' the sum, after hard struggling, came to £250.[93] However, Hastings was guaranteed his money and the Hunt was able to continue.

But all was not well with some members of the Ormond Hunt. In February 1873 a letter was forwarded to the *Nenagh Guardian* complaining of a loss to subscribers on account that the hounds were not hunting. The newspaper noted that the concluding part of the letter was 'altogether unwarranted' and the editor neglected to publish it.[94] It sparked a wave of letter writing to the paper in support of Lord Hastings, highlighting the indignation which the members felt towards the letter writer. James N. Atkinson had initially set the ball rolling by questioning the title of the pack as it appeared on 'the cards of meets.'[95] He argued that the pack should be called the 'Ormond Hounds' and not 'Lord Hastings' Hounds'. Hastings replied and he referred to the arrangements which had been made at hunt meetings in the previous year. At these meeting he said that he would supply the hounds. He further added that it was not a problem if his hounds were advertised as the 'Ormond and Kings' County Hunt.'[96] Then the issue surrounding the paucity of hunting days arose. There was some concern expressed that the Hunt did not meet regularly enough. It prompted the Hunt committee to call a meeting whereby the solidarity of the members conveyed to Hastings their full support. 'Thirty-four sporting gentlemen' attended and resolved that their 'best thanks' were due to Hastings 'for the satisfactory manner in which he has hunted the country during one of the most trying seasons on record.'[97]

[93] *Nenagh Guardian*, 7 Feb. 1872.
[94] *Nenagh Guardian*, 8 Feb. 1873.
[95] *Nenagh Guardian*, 1 Jan. 1873.
[96] *Nenagh Guardian*, 8 Jan. 1873.
[97] *Nenagh Guardian*, 22 Feb. 1873.

At a review of the 1873-74 hunting season a feeling was expressed by W. T. Trench (Treasurer) that Lord Hastings would not continue as Master as he was out of pocket by £82 11*s* 4*d* on the season. It was further stated that it would be impossible for Hastings to continue for 'the ensuing season unless the £82 were paid and £400 guaranteed for the forthcoming season.'[98] To a man in his position it appeared that he was being difficult in trying to extract the outstanding contribution from other hunt members. But, historically, the sum of £400 had not been attained in any of the seasons for which it had been guaranteed to Hastings. The total subscriptions for 1872-73 amounted to £344, while up to 18 April 1874 only £372 13*s* had been subscribed. This shortfall plus fowl money, fines and other expenses only exacerbated Hastings' losses. The stand taken by Hastings also gave him the opportunity to omit the Ormond country from his hunting territory. All told, W.T. Trench informed the meeting, he had heard Lord Hastings say that hunting the two countries, Ormond and Kings' County, 'cost him £800, [and] that the entire hunting of the country costs him over £1,200.' Before the end of the 1875-76 hunting season Hastings announced that he was giving up the Ormond country. The distance was too far for him and 'the expenses so great for two days a week'.[99] The financial demand on Hastings was too large a fee for him to indulge his passion and support his friends in their desire to chase foxes. But indulge them he did. For three seasons he hunted the Ormond country with 'great satisfaction to lovers of sport in this part of north Tipperary, and won great popularity for himself among all classes.'[100] His absence left a void in the Ormond country, one which was not easily resolved. The Hunt Club resolved to raise the subscription income to £500 and if this was achieved representations would be made to Lord Huntingdon to remain on as Master of the Ormond Hounds.[101] It left the community of the hunt in a quandary. Hastings did not have a change of heart. He left the

[98] *Nenagh Guardian*, 25 Apr. 1874.
[99] *Nenagh Guardian*, 5 Apr. 1876.
[100] *Nenagh Guardian*, 25 Mar. 1876.
[101] *Nenagh Guardian*, 5 Apr. 1876.

Ormond Hunt country, but in doing so gave them the pack which he had used for the previous three seasons.[102]

This section has looked at the financial organisation of the Tipperary Foxhounds and the Ormond Hunt to assess how each coped with the gap between income and expenditure. As a consequence of the number of meetings reported in the local press in the 1870s analysis of the hunt finances was possible. The evidence clearly shows that the primary difficulty with both packs was internal and stemmed from an inability to sufficiently recompense the Master for losses endured during the hunting season. There were also problems associated with the almost perennial shortfall in subscription fees. There was nothing unique in the financial difficulties experienced by both hunt bodies. The Westmeath Hunt Club had similar difficulties where officials and committee members also had the unenviable task of getting members to honour their financial commitments, as well as subscribing 'funds to maintain infrastructure.'[103] When compared with the leading foxhunting packs in England one could infer that there were delusions of grandeur in Tipperary in terms of what the members aimed for as opposed to what they actually got for their money. That these two hunt packs were regularly on the brink of financial embarrassment in the 1870s did not make them unique. In Australia, the Adelaide Hunt was also a victim of financial uncertainty in its early years. The pack was advertised for sale several times during the 1850s.[104]

[102] *Nenagh Guardian*, 29 Apr. 1876.
[103] Hunt. *Sport and society*, p. 23.
[104] John A. Daly. 'A new Britannia in the Antipodes: sport, class and community in colonial South Australia' in J.A. Mangan, (ed.) *Pleasure, profit and proselytism: British culture and sport at home and abroad 1700-1914* (London, 1988), p. 167.

Moreover, the malicious burning of the coverts of the Tipperary Hunt in 1879 resulted in the offer of £100 reward for information leading to the identity of those involved.[105] It added an extra expense to a club which could ill afford it. This was the start of land agitation and unrest aimed at the Tipperary Hunt. Ongoing threats to the survival of hunt packs in Ireland and England were the order of the day as the agricultural depression of the late 1870s set in. The impending impact of the Land War was yet to be felt. That the hunt packs survived the impact of the Land War and were able to re-establish themselves and return to the field demonstrated that there was a great will and desire for the sport to continue.

The Military

This section assesses the military involvement with the various hunt packs. It outlines where the military involvement was evident and the degree to which the military officers were able to go out into the field. Surprisingly, given the proliferation of military barracks in Tipperary, there was little comment in the local press about military involvement with hunting. This was in stark contrast to Westmeath where 'hunting was central to the lifestyle of many members of the Mullingar-based military regiments.'[106]

From 1846-47 officers at Cahir garrison were active hunt enthusiasts. From the season of 1861-62 to the end of 1880 a pack of harriers hunted from the garrison each year. These took to the field under the name of seventeen different cavalry regiments, testament to the turnover of regiments in the barracks. To maintain horses in peak condition regular hunting was a key feature of this barracks. Not content to sit around officers sought opportunities to hunt with neighbouring packs. The officers of the 3rd Dragoon Guards hunted with the Tipperary

[105] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 18 Jan. 1879.
[106] Hunt. *Sport and society*, p. 15.

Foxhounds on days when their own pack of harriers was not in the field.[107] Not alone did this expose them to a different type of hunt, it brought them into closer social contact with the elite members of south Tipperary society. This interaction further demonstrated that society in south Tipperary was stable. That the military could afford to devote so much time to hunting illustrated the relative calm which existed.

When a regiment received word to depart for its next posting it was common that the harriers were advertised for sale in the local press.[108] Mr. J. Goodden, 4th Dragoon Guards, offered for sale fifteen and a half couple prior to his departure from Cahir.[109] When the 7th Dragoon Guards were moved to Cork in April 1875 the harriers were immediately put up for sale in couples.[110] It is unclear who the purchasers were. The 7th Dragoons were replaced in the barracks by the 5th Dragoon Guards who, on their departure twelve months later, also advertised their pack for sale.[111] By continuing a tradition of hare hunting in the district the garrison pack was filling a void, though it was observed that 'while one regiment may delight in this class of hunting, another may not be quite as enthusiastic.'[112] These fears were unfounded. Between the seasons 1861-62 and 1880-81 Cahir garrison never failed to produce a harrier pack.

At Templemore barracks, a hunt pack was maintained for two seasons by Mr. Poynter in 1864 and 1865.[113] Officers from Clonmel and Tipperary barracks hunted with local packs,

[107] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 2 Jan 1878.
[108] It is also likely that this happened in the years preceding that of 1874, though sales or advertisement notices have not been identified.
[109] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 15 Apr. 1874.
[110] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 1 May 1875.
[111] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 13 May 1876.
[112] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 28 May 1864.
[113] *Nenagh Guardian*, 20 Jan. 1864; 11 Jan. 1865. *Clonmel Chronicle*, 16 Nov. 1864.

but their names appeared infrequently in the accounts reported in the press.[114] There is no evidence that either garrison had a specific hunt pack. Contrary to the promotion of hunting to hounds by various regiments at Cahir garrison, the remaining evidence for Tipperary, suggests that hunting was not a pursuit for other regiments. Cahir and its sister barracks at Fethard were primarily cavalry barracks where a plentiful supply of horses were available. It made sense to keep the horses active. An issue which likely impacted on the barracks at Clonmel was that there were already established hunt packs in existence, the Tipperary Hunt and the Clonmel Hounds.

The Role of Women in the Hunt

This section looks at the role of women within the hunting community of Tipperary. Women were keen and active followers of the various hunt communities. The analysis here demonstrates the degree to which they were active participants in the field. In England, the presence of women as enthusiasts in the hunting field increased in the middle of the nineteenth century.[115]

On 23 February 1849 a meeting of the Ormond and King's Co. Hounds was described by 'Foxhunter' in the *Nenagh Guardian* with some regret as he lamented the decline of 'The Noble Science'.[116] His mood lightened as he recalled the exertions of several followers depending on whether they were light weight or heavy weight. Either way it mattered little, as they were not 'allowed to gain many lengths on a fair visitor, Miss Goold.' Miss Goold was presented with 'the brush' on account that 'no person of the field so well deserved it'. However, the appearance of Miss Goold did not open the flood gates for female participation.

[114] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 2 Mar. 1870; 30 Apr. 1873
[115] Itzkowitz, *Peculiar privilege*, p. 55.
[116] *Nenagh Guardian*, 10 Mar. 1849.

Reports of hunt meetings at this time typically mirrored those throughout Ireland and England. They were brief and perfunctory.[117] But now, the appearance of ladies in the field helped to alter the way reports were written. The names of those who participated in the hunt were recorded in hunt reports. This had a positive impact, as the style of reporting changed and the exploits of various individuals were praised. However, this type of reporting did not find favour with everyone. The Master of the Ormond Hunt felt obliged to ask the *Nenagh Guardian* to include the names of twenty more men who were omitted from a contributed report in the previous issue. He disliked mentioning names, which he felt 'should be always avoided,' but he had to correct a wrong and include those whom he felt had been 'well up' at the finish of the meet in question.[118] It was not until the early 1860s that female names appeared regularly in hunt reports.[119] The participation and acceptance of women at hunt meetings demonstrated the ability of the hunt community to embrace those who could afford to be participants, whether they were lords, ladies, gentlemen or tenant farmers. The hunting field allowed for greater interaction between the gentlemen and ladies, with single gentlemen likely to ride hard wishing to impress the ladies. This added to the social aspect which the chase allowed – be it a fox or a prospective marriage partner.

The evidence also suggests that female followers of the hunt were as enthusiastic as their male counterparts. When the Redmonston Otter Hounds met at 4:50am in June 1868 there were 'several women' in attendance to follow the chase of nine miles up and down river.[120] The correspondent, who sent in reports of the activities of the 7th Dragoon Guards Harriers at Cahir barracks, had a keen eye for the ladies and wrote lovingly about them. In one account

[117] Itzkowitz, *Peculiar privilege*, p. 14.
[118] *Nenagh Guardian*, 2 Jan. 1867.
[119] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 20 Nov. 1861, 21 Mar. 1863.; Evidence of female participation in the hunt, in the 1860s, from Co. Westmeath mirrors those from Tipperary. See Hunt. *Sport and society*, p. 17.
[120] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 27 June 1868.

he wrote of a Miss Quin, whom he described as 'certainly the *belle ideal* of a horsewoman.'[121] Three months later, after the pack met on the estate of Lady Margaret Charteris at Cahir, he commented on the hunt conditions and how 'those Irish banks, so novel to English huntsmen, were *made easy* to them by the *forward riding* of a lady on a highly-bred horse, who went from field to field, as if on *wings*.'[122] The important point here is that though men could admire the good hunting and horsemanship shown by a woman, the last thing any man wanted was for a woman to beat him to the kill! This indeed is what happened when the Tipperary Hounds came to the end of a run on the last meet of 1877.[123] 'The highly accomplished *equestrienne* - Miss Massy, of Kingswell House, Tipperary' was close to the hounds at the finish and witnessed the kill. Her exploits in the field resulted in the Master, Mr. Bellamy, presenting her with the brush. The fact that these ladies could ride well demonstrated that, in all likelihood, they had taken riding lessons, something which most men probably did not.[124]

One location where women were especially welcome was at the hunt ball. In rural Tipperary the opportunities for social engagement were rare, especially for women. The hunt ball gave ladies an opportunity to dress lavishly, dance and meet their social equals in mid-winter. The Tinvane Hunt ball held in Carrick-on-Suir, in January 1845 had 'upwards of one hundred and twenty of the elite of the surrounding counties' present and 'no further room for flirtation' was possible once the dancing commenced.[125] Attendance did not come cheaply. At the end of 1845 tickets for another hunt ball cost 10*s* for gentlemen and 7*s* 6*d* for ladies.[126] The

[121] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 14 Nov. 1874. It is unknown if this Miss Quin is the same person, Lucy Quinn, who featured in the archery reports in Chapter Two, p. 87.
[122] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 17 Feb. 1875. Italics are as appeared in the original text.
[123] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 2 Jan. 1878.
[124] Itzkowitz, *Peculiar privilege*, p. 56.
[125] *Tipperary Free Press*, 4 Jan. 1845.
[126] *Tipperary Free Press*, 10 Nov. 1845.

Tinvane Hunt was the trend setter. The hunt ball was the highlight of the social calendar. In 1846, the attendance of 'all the *elite*, sporting and fashionable' was all the more noticeable, especially when the Lord Lieutenant, a patron on the hunt, was in attendance.[127] This great social occasion in south Tipperary came to an end when the Tinvane Hunt gave up its country to Lord Waterford in March 1847.[128] It was not until twenty years later that hunt balls were a feature of the hunting season once more. A note in the *Nenagh Guardian* suggesting that the Ormond Hunt organise a hunt ball encouraged 'Mary' to communicate with the newspaper. She suggested that officers of the nearest garrisons should be invited. Above all, she wished that this should include 'some cavalry officers, and that they of course attend in uniform. Oh! The pleasure of waltzing with an officer in full uniform is beyond conception; the thought of it almost enchants me.'[129]

From 1867 to 1880 the active participation of women in the hunt field continued to grow. Not only did women hunt with foxhounds, they also participated in hare and otter hunt gatherings. Women were also found at the racecourse. The hunt club races were, in many instances, the perfect way to end the hunting season. From 1840 the Ormond Hunt held annual hunt races which were the precursor to more fashionable national hunt meetings in subsequent years.[130] Hunt race meetings at Cahir (1857) and Fethard (1863), the latter under the auspices of the Tipperary Hunt, also gave women another avenue for social intercourse where they filled the stands and 'added' to the occasion.[131]

[127] *Tipperary Free Press*, 2 Dec. 1846; *Tipperary Vindicator*, 2 Dec. 1846.
[128] *Tipperary Free Press*, 6 Mar. 1847.
[129] *Nenagh Guardian*, 30 Jan. 1867.
[130] *Nenagh Guardian*, 1 Apr. 1840.
[131] *Tipperary Free Press*, 24 July 1857; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 25 Mar. 1863.

This section has assessed the participation of women as riders, supporters and followers of the hunt community. Various press reports indicated that some huntswomen were as adept at horsemanship as many of their male contemporaries. That some huntswomen were presented with the brush was indicative of their riding ability and that they were not as squeamish as some of their male counterparts may have assumed. With the sports of archery, croquet and lawn tennis female participation was reserved for those from a landed background. What differentiated the huntswoman was that following the hunt was a more robust and vigorous activity, one which required several hours in the field, perhaps experiencing inclement weather. As the nineteenth century progressed the sight of huntswomen was common among the hunt community of England.[132] That their contemporaries in rural Tipperary took to the field demonstrated that the hunt communities in the county were in tune with what was happening elsewhere. Improvements to female hunting apparel were also enhanced with the introduction of a shorter safety skirt.[133] While designed to enhance the safety of the huntswoman, it was also a horse riding innovation which was part of a growing commercialisation of sport in late nineteenth century Great Britain and Ireland.

Animal Welfare

This last section looks at animal welfare. It assesses the extent to which concern for animal welfare was something which the hunt community displayed. This related to the animals hunted and to the hounds or the horses involved in the chase. It also pays attention to opposition to the hunt, especially in relation to issues surrounding blood sports.

[132] Itzkowitz, *Peculiar privilege*, pp 5-56. Emma Griffin. *Blood sport: hunting in Britain since 1066* (New Haven and London, 2007), pp 166-7.
[133] Griffin, *Blood sport*, p. 167.

An account of the Ormond Hunt season 1874-75 showed that only twelve foxes, from fifty-two finds, were killed. During this season the hounds were out twice a week or forty days in total.[134] With two foxhunting packs in the county, more or less consistently throughout the period of this thesis, one could extrapolate that if each killed twelve foxes in a season it would amount to the death of just under 1,000 foxes over a forty year period.[135]

Hunting hounds were cared for very well by all Masters and hunt committees. An isolated incident was reported that a hound was killed by a train when the Redmonston Otter Hounds were out in June 1868.[136] But the greatest threat to hounds was that of poison. While poison was laid to protect game on preserves where shooting took place, persons with sinister intent also laid poison to kill hounds. In one such instance in November 1876 the Earl of Huntingdon lost five hounds to poison near Birr, Co. Offaly. One of them was a stud-dog valued at £100. This was the first such instance recorded in that county. It led to outrage locally. The Tipperary view was somewhat different as the fact that it happened in Offaly was seen as 'a matter of congratulation that such did not happen in the hunting country of the Ormonds.'[137] The onset of the Land War saw poison used as a weapon of choice by hunt saboteurs. In March 1883 Captain Langley, Master of the Tipperary Hunt, lost five hounds to poison at Rathkenny covert. He lost a further eleven, also to poison, at the kennels in early February 1884.[138]

Farming was a business and rabbits were a constant problem for farmers. Consequently, of great concern to foxhunters was the indiscriminate use of rabbit traps. In the spring of 1872 a

[134] *Nenagh Guardian*, 28 Apr. 1875.
[135] This is based only on the figures for the Ormond Hunt season returns of 1874-75, as similar reports from other seasons of each respective Hunt have not yet come to light.
[136] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 27 June 1868.
[137] *Nenagh Guardian*, 15 Nov. 1876.
[138] *Sport*, 10 Mar. 1883; *Nenagh Guardian*, 6 Feb. 1884.

great difficulty arose over the destruction of foxes due to the increased use of such traps around the county. It caused Mr. Tennant, of Mobarnane, to write to the hunt on the matter noting that 'it had become a question whether he or the rabbits were to enjoy his property at Mobarnane.'[139] A discussion arose as to the use of ferrets to kill rabbits. Major Kellett commented that 700 rabbits were killed by ferrets in 1869. Some argued that ferrets had not as much impact as traps or snares. Mr. J. Langley employed two Englishmen and they took 1,014 rabbits at a sandpit where, under supervision, no harm was done to foxes.[140] The difficulty here was that foxes were also getting trapped and this went very much against the grain with those associated with the sport of fox hunting.

Though foxhunting led to the death of foxes - though not at all meets as has been shown - the evidence of the research indicates that fox welfare was very important to the hunt community. When five foxes were found killed and dumped in a field it led to John Going was outraged. The killing and dumping of the animal carcasses was anathema to the Tipperary Master. Conversely, when a fox went to ground when the King's Co. Hunt was out in January 1879, he was dug out. Some expected it to be set free and hunted again but Mr. Biddulph grabbed the fox and threw it into the middle of the pack.[141] This led the land owner, Mr. W.P.H.L. Vaughan, who was also a member of the hunt, to describe the act as 'unsportsmanlike.' Masters from four separate hunt clubs wrote in support of Biddulph's actions. Lord Waterford deemed it necessary on the grounds that if hounds go out day after day and do not get blood 'a fox should be killed in any way possible on the first opportunity, or else the work of the hounds must deteriorate.'[142]

[139] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 8 May 1872.
[140] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 8 May 1872.
[141] *Nenagh Guardian*, 1 Feb. 1879.
[142] *Nenagh Guardian*, 1 Feb. 1879.

Apart from the untimely death of Lord Waterford fatalities to humans were uncommon in the hunting field. The death of horses was a different matter. In the course of a fifteen mile run in February 1851 'forty horsemen' set out with the Ormond hounds. Two horses were killed during the chase which was described as a testament to 'the severity of the day's sport.'[143] But this type of hard riding epitomised foxhunting in Tipperary in the 1840s. Both Lord Waterford and Valentine Maher, Turtulla, were well known for their hard riding in Melton Mowbray, something which they brought back with them to Ireland.[144]

This section has considered animal welfare. While there is no denying that many animals were killed the fact that the fox, while deemed as vermin, was yet an erstwhile quarry for huntsmen to pursue with hounds. As Griffin has shown, there was a great danger that but for preservation initiatives offered by some hunters the fox would have followed the wild boar and wolf into extinction.[145] The management of preserves and coverts was duly adhered to by the hunt followers of Tipperary and its surrounding counties. External malevolent forces also sought to undermine the hunt as hunt packs were poisoned. This lead to the death of many hounds. The indiscriminate killing of foxes was anathema to the hunt community. Horses were ridden hard in the field but injuries here resulted from accidents. In assessing animal welfare in the context of the hunt community, it was somewhat ironic that it was the poster boy of the hunt and racing fraternity of Tipperary and Waterford, the 3rd Marquis of Waterford, who paid the biggest price of all with his untimely death on his return home after a day in the field.

[143] *Nenagh Guardian*, 26 Feb. 1851.
[144] Watson. *Between the flags*, p. 49. Welcome. *Irish horse-racing*, p. 37.
[145] Griffin. *Blood sport*, p. 135.

Conclusion

This chapter set out to chronicle the growth and development of hunting in its various forms in Co. Tipperary. What is has demonstrated is that a pre-Famine preference for foxhunting countywide was continued. Two of the packs, the Tipperary Hunt and the Ormond Hounds, were subscription packs and this tradition continued after the Famine, even though the Ormond's had periodic difficulties in keeping their part of the county active. A third pack, Mr. Langley's Foxhounds, was a private pack and though not as active as the former two, his withdrawal from hunting left a foxhunting void in mid-Tipperary which was largely filled by harrier packs. In the 1860s an increase in the number of harrier packs accelerated the degree to which hunting embraced the whole county. When the hunt locations are analysed some areas did not see any hunt activity. This was the hill community on the west, around Kilcommon, and in the south of the county, where the Galtee Mountains covered large tracts of land. However, the Galtee Mountains was a popular area for shooting parties.

A common difficulty with all hunt packs was one of finance, especially with subscription packs. Financial difficulties experienced by the hunt clubs were reported in the local press. This demonstrated a move towards informing hunt supporters of the internal mechanisms of the hunt club. It also served as a way of highlighting the difficulties which each club faced.

Hunting to hounds was central to the horse industry in Tipperary and Ireland. While thoroughbred horses were prized for their horseracing ability horse owners, many of them farmers, enhanced their yearly income with the provision of a stallion standing at stud near where they resided. This gave employment to groomsmen and provided the hunt with horses as necessary. Though the hunt may trample over young corn it was pointed out that those who bought the oats were none other than the horse owners. Those who had the means of

disposing of dead farm animals were the hunt pack and those who bought the hunters were regularly the hunt horsemen. The community of the land was bound up by connections which ran much deeper than just rent payments. The hunt community had connections which spread far and wide, ranging from farrier to saddler and hotelier to farmer. The hunt community in Tipperary from 1840 to 1880 was integral to the growth of a strong equine industry. This subsequently developed. It is now a byword for Tipperary in relation to thoroughbred horse racing and breeding.

Chapter 4: The Turf – Horse Racing Development and Commercialisation, 1840-1880.

Introduction

As has been demonstrated in the previous chapter, the impact of the equine industry was extensive throughout county Tipperary. This was further enhanced with the continued development and growth of horse racing throughout the nineteenth century. While it is true, that Tipperary had no heavy industry, sporting activities relating to horses were such, that a whole range of ancillary trades and goods were necessary to underpin what was fast becoming an important employment sector. Horse racing and hunting to hounds overlapped, as hunt races were a feature of both the racing and hunting seasons. Hunt races were common when the hunt season drew to a close, in March or early April. It was also a feature of both sports in Westmeath.[1] While the hunt races attracted many established members of the hunt community, these races were also part of the horse racing fabric of Tipperary.

Prior to the time frame under review, horse racing had an established tradition in the county. A three day meeting was held in Thurles in 1732.[2] Also in 1732, there was a week of racing on the course near Cashel, which was sponsored by the Green Cloth Club.[3] Nothing more is known about this club. Some years later, in 1775, there was a five day race meeting in Nenagh.[4] Cashel and Nenagh also held meetings in 1777.[5] All three locations featured in the nineteenth century, as horse racing became regularised. As is demonstrated throughout this chapter, the degree to which these locations featured was not uniform. As Kelly has shown, in the eighteenth century, 'in certain instances the organisational task was undertaken by local

[1] Hunt. *Sport and society*, p. 31.
[2] D'Arcy. *Horses, lords and racing men*, p. 16.
[3] *Pue's Occurrences*, 22 July 1732, quoted in Kelly. 'The pastime of the elite,' p. 414.
[4] James Weatherby. *Racing calendar: containing an account of the plates, matches, and sweepstakes, run for in Great-Britain and Ireland in the year 1775*. Vol. 3 (London, 1775), p. 203.
[5] D'Arcy. *Horses, lords and racing men*, pp 16, 18.

bodies, which provide the first tantalising evidence of an embryonic associational culture in horse-racing'.[6] The scant evidence for Tipperary supports this view. Like minded gentlemen came together, to arrange race meetings, which, though they may have been run over three, four or five days, in essence amounted to a small number of races. In the case of Nenagh, in 1775, there were five races run over five days, with each race run off over a series of heats to determine the winner. This race format carried over into the mid-nineteenth century and while inferring continuity, it also shows that there was little change to the overall race structure, however limited it was.

There are nine townlands recorded in Ireland which bear the name Racecourse.[7] Three of these are found in Tipperary. Apart from the racecourse at Thurles, the other two, near Cashel and Clonmel, have, historically, held race meetings, but the undefined courses there have left no mark on the landscape and survive only as a placename location. A village community which bears the name 'Horse and Jockey' is also testament to the heritage of horse racing in the county.[8]

Horse racing differed from other sports in Tipperary, in that it was nationally federated before any other sporting body in Ireland. This is of great importance to this thesis, as the federating body, the Turf Club, from its central location in the Curragh, Co. Kildare, became ever more influential in the regulation of horse racing in Ireland, as the nineteenth century progressed. The managerial roles which the Turf Club personnel took on in Tipperary extended the reach of sport to include individuals who would not normally have any association with the county. This deference to a national body by Tipperary stewards and organising committees of race

[6] Kelly. 'The pastime of the elite,' p. 414.
[7] *General alphabetical index to the townlands and towns, parishes and baronies of Ireland* (Baltimore, 1984), p. 767.
[8] Cronin and Higgins. *Places we play*, pp 251, 253.

meetings in the county, demonstrate the degree to which these men were prepared to cede authority to a higher body.

Uniquely among all sports, it was only at race meetings where specific mention was made of those in attendance: spectators, stall holders, officials, owners and jockeys. While athletics provided huge attendance numbers, as is outlined in Chapter Five, the nature of the people in attendance at the race meetings, quite often drew the attention of the person who wrote up an account of the day and sent it in to the local press. This aspect also features in this chapter, and contributes to the thesis an impression of the sheer scale of commercialisation which was associated with the races.

This chapter chronicles the continued growth of horse racing in Tipperary from these initial meetings. Factors contributing to this growth are demonstrated and the consequent numbers of race meetings are quantified. The overall structure of the sport in the county is put into context, in a comparative analysis with horse racing in Ireland and Great Britain. The fluid nature of society was such, that 'the horses, lords and racing men,' to paraphrase the Turf Club historian, Fergus D'Arcy, associated with horse racing in Tipperary, were from varied parts of Ireland and not just Tipperary. There is some chronological basis which underpins this chapter, but this is for demonstrative purposes to indicate growth and development. Finally, to confer substance to this section, one specific location is investigated in detail. This is Cashel, a town which had a rich racing heritage. The railway network began to criss-cross Tipperary from 1848 and the extent to which the railways impacted on horse racing is also explored.

The paucity of academic publications on certain aspects of sports history in Ireland is reflected in the dearth of research into the growth and development of horse racing and the associated industry surrounding it.[9] The classic monograph is Fergus D'Arcy's history of the Turf Club, the Irish equivalent to the Jockey Club in England. Academic research, comparable to that completed by Tom Hunt on Westmeath, is the intention in this section.[10] Narrative studies, specific to various aspects of horse racing in Ireland, from both a national and local perspective, also offer great insight into how steeplechase and flat racing developed in the nineteenth century.[11] From a Tipperary perspective the sole contribution to this field is a contributed article to a local historical journal, which discusses the re-development of Cashel races and its stand house at the latter end of the 1890s.[12] This chapter critically assesses the macro and micro forces that created such a buoyant and central part of the county's early sporting revolution.

Authoritative and scholarly studies have set the standard for research into the study of horse racing in a British context.[13] Issues raised in these works have assisted in this regional study. In contrast, while there are stud books and stud brochures maintained to highlight the importance of the bloodstock industry to Ireland, there has been no academic analysis of racing trends or the impact of the bloodstock market to the Irish economy.[14] There seems to be no easy answer as to why there is so little research on the subject of racing in Ireland.

[9] Kelly. *Sport in Ireland*, p. 21.
[10] Hunt. "Chapter 2: Horseracing development, 1850-1905" in. 'The development of sport in County Westmeath,' pp 73-124.
[11] Watson. *Between the flags*; Williams and Hyland, The *Irish Derby*; Welcome. *Irish horse-racing*; John O'Flaherty. *Listowel races, 1858-1991* (Listowel, 1992); Stan McCormack. *Against the odds, Kilbeggan races, 1840-1994* (Np. 1994); Williams and Hyland. *Irish Grand National*.
[12] Pat Maher. 'The Cashel racecourse stand house' in *Boherlahan Dualla Historical Journal 2000*, pp 40-5.
[13] Wray Vamplew. *The Turf: a social and economic history of horse racing*, (London, 1976). Mike Huggins. *Flat racing and British society 1790-1914: a social and economic history*, (London, 2000).
[14] Coolmore Stud in Co. Tipperary produce an annual stallion handbook, and an annual Breeders' handbook. Coolmore Stud was also the subject of an investigative article in a Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association publication in 1987. David L. Heckerman. 'King of kings' in *The Blood-horse* (19 July 1997), pp 3822-26.

Apart from the work of Tony Sweeney and D'Arcy, there is no substantive work which assesses the value of horse racing to the country, or the implications of the tax relief scheme associated with the breeding industry.[15]

Furthermore, academic research relating to the pattern of horse racing development in Yorkshire and the impact of the railways on flat racing in Britain are key comparative studies, from which analogies to the sport in Tipperary are made.[16] In essence, the model of racing which developed in Tipperary and specifically that of racing over fences, mirrored that which took place in Great Britain. The Turf Club, general patronage, railway companies and horse owners came together and turned what was a largely unstructured eighteenth century associational activity into a racing industry. This would, due to the advances made in the nineteenth century, position Ireland as a leading player in the global racing industry of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

At a meeting of members of the Jockey Club, the precursor to the Turf Club, in 1777 the 'office of Keeper of the Match Book' was instituted.[17] This was a very early date for organisational structure in sport, in an Irish context. A match book was used to record 'details of agreed matches' while other rules deemed that 'details of stakes, conditions and entries' were to be notified to the club well in advance.[18] This was the beginning of a defined structure, which would eventually lead to codification of the racing structure in Ireland in the nineteenth century. D'Arcy notes 'that the Curragh Jockey Club had faltered around 1782-83,

[15] Tony & Annie Sweeney and Francis Hyland. *The Sweeney guide to the Irish turf 1501-2001*. (Dublin, 2002).
[16] Iris Maud Middleton. 'The developing pattern of horse racing in Yorkshire 1700-1749: an analysis of the people and the places,' unpublished PhD thesis, de Montfort University, Leicester, 2000. John Tolson. "'The railway myth': flat racing in mainland Britain, 1830-1914," unpublished PhD thesis, de Montfort University, Leicester, 2000.
[17] D'Arcy. *Horses, lords and racing men*, p. 9.
[18] D'Arcy. *Horses, lords and racing men*, p. 10.

only to be revived as the Turf Club in 1784'.[19] Members of the Turf Club officiated at races around the country, acting as stewards to ensure that rules and regulations were adhered to.

Characteristics of Horse Racing

This analysis of horse racing commences with an overview of how the sport was organised in mid-nineteenth century Tipperary. By quantifying the dates and schedules of meetings, patterns are identified which assist in presenting an argument for the development of racing countywide. The results show that pre-Famine horse racing in Tipperary was relatively unstructured in terms of its organisational framework. Race meetings took place when dates on the calendar became available and were not already booked by a neighbouring town or prominent meeting in other parts of Ireland notably at the Curragh, Punchestown or Baldoyle. The attraction of the more prestigious meetings impacted on the capacity of 'local' meetings to attract sufficient horses to fill some races. Spring, summer and autumn meetings in the Curragh were well established and standardised from the eighteenth century.

Of all the race meetings in Ireland, it was the Curragh which was the stand out meeting and race course. In 1775 it had four meetings in April, June, September and October.[20] In 1786 it was still the principal meeting in Ireland though having only three meetings in April, June and September.[21] Dublin's growing population had easy access to the Curragh. The schedule of meetings show the allocation of dates was governed by the Turf Club. This demonstrates that horse racing as a sport, was federated, institutionalised and centrally controlled from very early on.

[19] D'Arcy. *Horses, lords and racing men*, p. 12.
[20] Weatherby. *Racing calendar 1775*, pp 177-79; 181-83; 199-201; 205-6.
[21] James Weatherby. *Racing calendar containing and account of the plates, matches and sweepstakes run for in Great Britain and Ireland in the year 1786*. Vol. 14 (London, 1786), pp 174-8; 187-9.

The initial race format in Tipperary was one of steeple chasing with relatively few flat races included on the card. This infers that the quality of horse stock was not one which depended on thoroughbreds, but rather hunters and chasers, which could clear the fences and walls, that were typically a feature of local courses. Several early horse races were 'matches' arranged by some local gentlemen or military officers regularly for a set wager. The outcome of a 'pounding match' at Clonmel for a wager was referred to the 'Jockey Club' for a resolution.[22] Again this is evidence of central control with an appeals process in place to assist in resolving disputes. This type of event attracted great local interest and as was a feature of steeplechasing, the course was one which took place on open country, inclusive of whatever obstacle or fence was in the way. Races of this type were unpredictable and as such, chance played as much a part in the outcome, as did the skill of the jockey or stamina of the horse. Examples of these are the steeplechase races which took place from Rathronan demesne to Prior Park and a similar one from Knockelly Castle to Mortlestown Castle, both in the south of the county in January 1840.[23] At this juncture, there was no requirement to enclose courses, as these were only occasional meetings, which were essentially point-to-point races. These required no fixed infrastructure. Courses only became enclosed once there was an opportunity for profit, when there were regular meetings and income for the landowners.

In total, inclusive of single race events, 283 race meetings have been identified from the start of 1840 to the end of 1880. Fifty-five race meetings, inclusive of those which had two days or more racing, have been identified for the period from 1840 to the end of 1845 at the commencement of the Great Famine. Ten meetings have been identified during the main

[22] *Tipperary Free Press,* 25 June 1845. I assume the term 'pounding match' refers to two horses going hell for leather across a field. In the press report the term 'Jockey Club' was used, by which, I believe, is meant, the Turf Club.
[23] *Tipperary Free Press,* 8 Jan. 1840; *Nenagh Guardian,* 18 Jan. 1840.

Famine years 1846-48 inclusive. The remaining 218 meetings took place during the years 1849-1880 inclusive. The months when all races took place are shown in Figure 14.

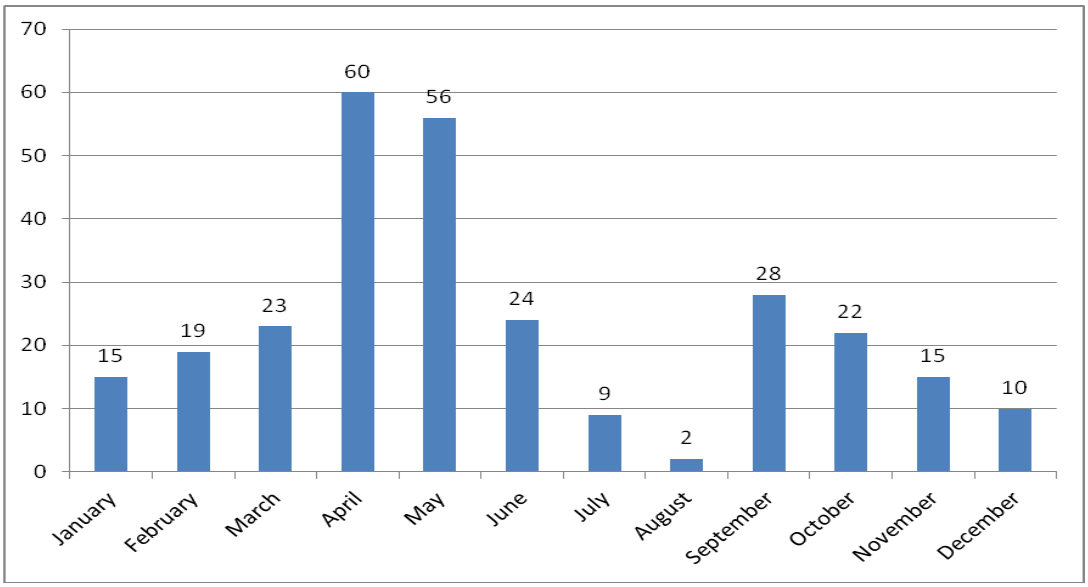

Figure 14: Number of horse race meetings in Tipperary, 1840-1880 (Total = 283)

The analysis shows that April and May were the favoured months for holding race meetings, with the figures being sixty and fifty-six respectively, coinciding with the end of the hunting season. Most meetings took place over the first half of the year, with 197 meetings in this period, compared to eighty-six meetings in the latter six month period. These meetings were spread countywide, though once more the hill district of north-west Tipperary was an area, devoid of any involvement. As has been shown in the introductory chapter, evidence for recreational sport, apart from hurling, in this part of the county has been sparse in the local press. This is not to say that no race meetings took place here, however unstructured, but the relative absence of evidence for any sport infers that it was one area where it did not happen. When some farmer's races took place at Latteragh, in 1844, the local press described the area as a 'wild mountain district'.[24]

[24] *Nenagh Guardian*, 17 Apr. 1844.

Five year aggregate totals for race meetings are shown of Figure 15. When compared with those of Westmeath, the data indicates that the popularity of racing increased in Tipperary in the 1860s, whereas it had remained stable in Westmeath from 1855 to 1879.[25] But, similar to Westmeath, Tipperary benefitted from the role which the various hunt packs had on the development of hunt racing and steeple-chasing. Of the 283 meetings which took place, forty-one (fourteen per cent) were organised by hunt clubs. From 1840, the Ormond Hunt was holding race meetings, at what was termed the 'Lismacrory course,' meetings which would continue into the 1870s.[26] For all intents and purposes, this was not a defined course, which was enclosed and had race day facilities. Rather, it was a race track marked out on open countryside. The hunt races at Fethard, primarily associated with the Tipperary Fox hounds, were also a popular event on the racing calendar.[27]

The patronage of the hunt officials of horse racing also facilitated the holding of farmer's races, which, as the race articles dictated, were open only to those farmers over whose land the hunt crossed.[28] Races were for 'working farmers,' with the stewards having the power to disqualify any participant 'who is not such in the general acceptance of the word.' Of this total, twenty were organised by the Ormond Hunt and twelve by the Co. Tipperary Hunt. These were the two largest hunt communities in the county as has been shown in Chapter Three. By organising hunt races, principally in late spring, they provided an end of season occasion for communal socialising for all patrons, supporters and followers of the hunt. It was an occasion when men and women could meet at the same location and socialise, discuss, plan and flirt.[29] The hunt communities were one of the prime instigators of national

[25] Hunt. *Sport and society*, p. 40.
[26] *Nenagh Guardian*, 1 Apr. 1840; 29 Apr. 1843; 22 Apr. 1868; 4 May 1872; 10 May 1876.
[27] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 19 Nov. 1862; 25 Mar. 1863; 23 Apr. 1864.
[28] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 29 Apr. 1874.
[29] Itzkowitz. *Peculiar privilege*, p. 104. Hunt. *Sport and society*, p. 31.

hunt racing in Tipperary, enjoying the support of Lord Waterford and Lord Hastings as principal stewards.[30]

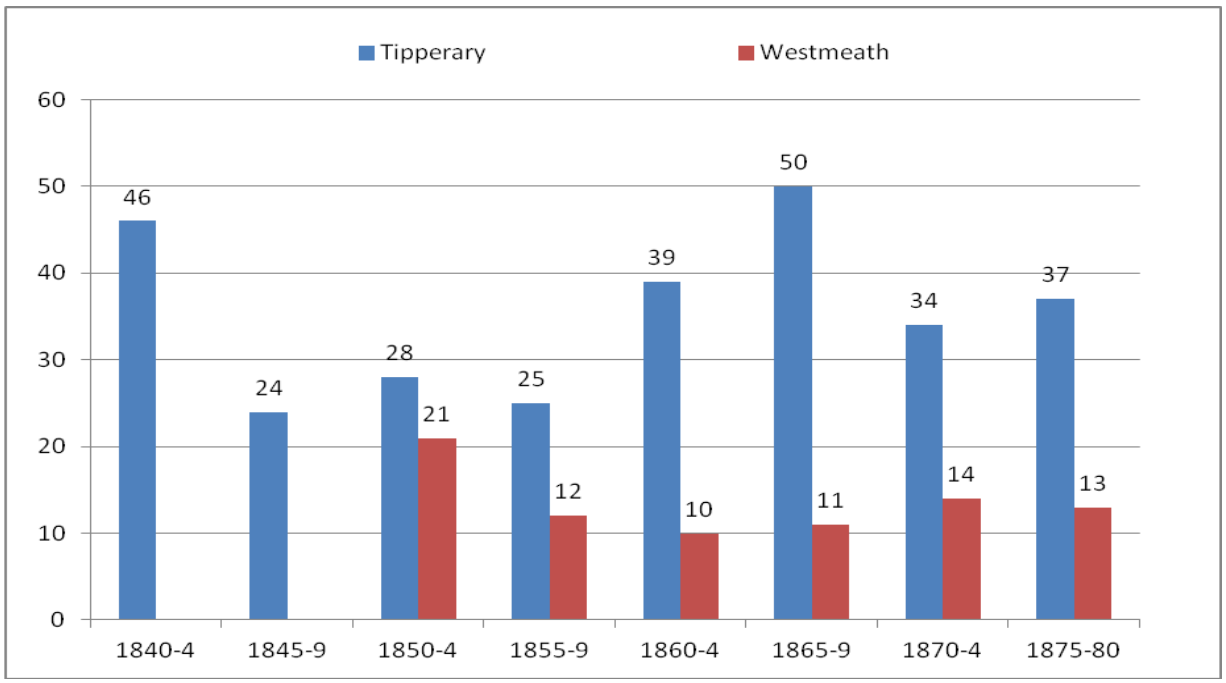

Figure 15: Frequency of race meetings organised in County Tipperary, 1840-1880 as identified in the Tipperary press. There is no data available for the 1840s for County Westmeath.

From the 283 meetings 1,154 races have been identified. Table 10 gives a return of the race types. As may be observed from the data, steeple-chase racing was the preferred race type, with the returns for flat races and hurdle/hunt races, evenly matched. Some meetings concluded with a match race, popular among gentlemen and military officers, often run for a specific amount of money.[31] Match races were popular up to 1851, as the nature of meetings were localised and often privately run.

[30] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 1 May 1872; 29 April 1874; 9 May 1874. *Nenagh Guardian*, 6 Sept. 1879.
[31] *Nenagh Guardian*, 1 Apr. 1840; *Tipperary Constitution*, 5 Feb. 1841; *Tipperary Free Press*, 12 Feb. 1851.

Table 10: Horse race types identified in Co. Tipperary, 1840-1880

Steeple-chase race	798
Flat race	126
Hurdle race	30
Hunt race	106
Match race	27
Hack race	6
Unidentified	61
Total	1154

Table 11: Horse race prize funds in Co. Tipperary, 1840-1880

Plate races	261
Sweepstake races	158
Farmers race	127
Handicap race	116
Selling race	92

Race meeting reports, as identified in the local press, were cross referenced with results in the *Racing Calendar*, compiled by the Hunter family the Irish equivalent to the Weatherby *Racing Calendar*. In the offical *Calendar*, 165 Tipperary meetings (fifty-eight per cent) were matched with newspaper reports. On analysis, the cross matching is higher during the latter half of the period under review. Prior to the Famine, only fourteen meetings out of forty-six identified (thirty per cent), were reported in the *Racing Calendar*. This suggests a race pattern

which was localised and unregulated from a national context. As Figure 16 demonstrates, the cross matching attained higher proportions in the 1870s.

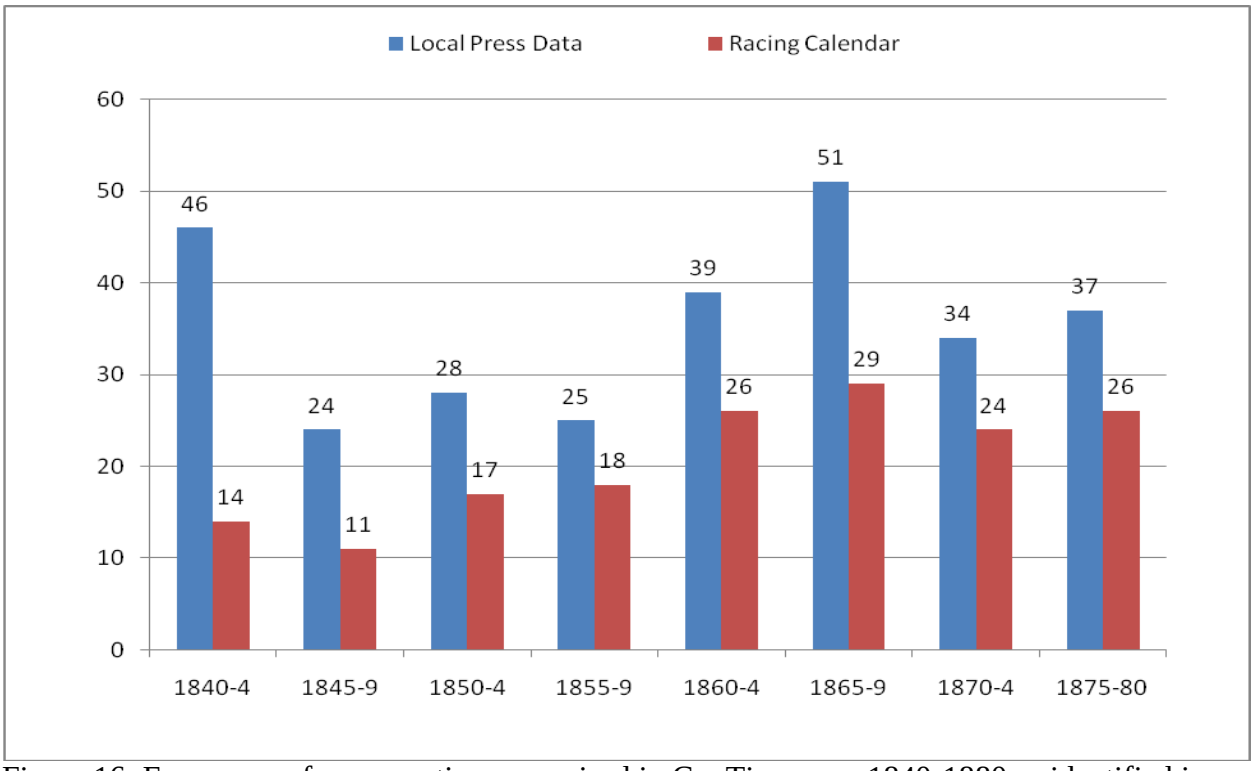

Figure 16: Frequency of race meetings organised in Co. Tipperary, 1840-1880 as identified in R.J. Hunter's *Racing Calendar* and compared with the Tipperary press data

In late December 1841, the race articles for what was termed the 'grand national steeplechase' at Carrick-on-Suir, were published.[32] Typically, these races were run over courses which were arranged to suit the nature of the races in question, with natural hedgerows and field boundary walls incorporated into the obstacles which were jumped. Most races were run over a series of heats to decide the winner.[33] If three different horses won the first three heats, then a fourth heat would take between these horses to get a winner. The advantage of such a system was that an afternoon's racing could enjoyed by spectators, with the organisers having to put up only one prize. Though an individual's land may have been regularly utilised for race meetings, there is no evidence to suggest that there was any

[32] *Tipperary Free Press*, 29 Dec. 1841.
[33] Middleton. 'Horse racing in Yorkshire,' p. 66.

degree of permanence with the majority of courses. Once the racing was over, the land reverted to agricultural use and any grandstands erected were dismantled. Races were organised and run by the Ormond and Kings County Hunt annually from 1840 to 1846, over a course laid out on the lands of Simpson Hackett at Lismacrory, near Borrisokane, in the north of the county, (see Figure 17).[34]

Figure 17: Location of race meetings in County Tipperary, 1840-1880.

[34] *Nenagh Guardian*, 27 Apr. 1842.

These race meetings, while coinciding with the end of the hunting season, were also regular in terms of their dates. Typically they took place in March or April.[35] Outside Tipperary town, the first recorded race meeting at the Barronstown course took place on 27 March 1848.[36] Over the next twenty-two years, the fortunes of this course fluctuated. The land owners had concerns about granting permission to the race committee. A new course was laid out, in 1872, by Thomas G. Waters at Brookville and this appeared to have sated the local racing aficionados.[37] Fences were erected and a stand house was built. Waters was a civil engineer from Kilpatrick, Monasterevin, Co. Kildare and was well versed in race course management.

Yet in spite of the semi-permanence of these courses in the racing calendar of Tipperary, the informal nature of these courses meant that only one, Thurles, featured in the 1840 Ordnance Survey maps (see Figure 18).[38] That a racecourse appeared on these maps, in a townland of the same name – Racecourse – suggests that there was a defined circuit in existence.[39] It was not one whereby the route between the flags was solely at the discretion of the jockeys. The added inclusion of a stand house on the map further emphasised the permanence of the course. The fact that this course was mapped by the Ordnance Survey, suggests that at this stage, it had assumed a club identity. This was an early innovation for horse racing in Tipperary and was sufficient for the Ordnance Survey to recognise the importance of sport on the landscape. Today, national hunt racing still continues at this racecourse, demonstrating a continuity of function.

[35] *Nenagh Guardian*, 1 Apr. 1840; *Tipperary Free Press*, 28 Apr. 1841; *Nenagh Guardian*, 27 Apr. 1842; 29 Apr. 1843; *Tipperary Vindicator*, 10 Apr. 1844; 5 Apr. 1845; 21 Feb. 1846.
[36] *Tipperary Free Press*, 1848.
[37] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 18 Sept. 1872.
[38] The first edition Ordnance Survey were on a scale of six inches to the mile.
[39] *General alphabetical index to the townlands and towns, parishes and baronies of Ireland* (Baltimore, 1984), p. 767.

Figure 18: Thurles racecourse, 1840. (Ordnance Survey 6" map)

A three day race meeting, similar to those of previous years in the eighteenth century, took place on Thurles racecourse in February 1840.[40] Thurles also hosted a second three-day meeting that year, in the latter half of October.[41] When the race articles for this meeting were published, they stated that horses were to be entered 'with the keeper of the Match Book, Kildare' indicating that the course was taking a lead and direction from what was now the governing body of horse racing in Ireland.[42] Mindful that the Curragh was holding multiple meetings per year, a second meeting at any one of the Tipperary venues was going to be of benefit to the local community. There was added value to the Great Southern and Western Railway Company, to the hotels and bars, as well as to the blacksmiths and farriers, all of

[40] The race articles were published in the *Nenagh Guardian*, 29 Jan. 1840. A report of the three day meeting was published in the *Nenagh Guardian*, 11 Mar. 1840
[41] *Tipperary Free Press*, 28 Oct. 1840.
[42] *Tipperary Free Press*, 16 Oct. 1840.

which would have seen the positive impact, which another race meeting brought to their finances.

Yet, these were the only three-day meetings in the county that year. The only other course which held a three-day race meeting was Cashel. Three-day meetings were held here in October 1845, October 1852 and October 1853.[43] In October 1849, a four-day race meeting was held at the famed Cashel course.[44] From 1854 onwards, the most Cashel races could offer to its patrons was a two-day meeting. From this date, there were no more three day race festivals in the county. In November 1843, support for the Thurles races was short lived, as P.B. Ryan refused the racecourse to the 'sporting gentry of Thurles' for race meetings.[45] Racing was adjourned until new 'ground could be procured.'[46] Throughout the period under review, in spite of the fact that there was a well defined and mapped racecourse, racing only occurred on an intermittent basis in Thurles and not always on the aforementioned racecourse ground. Racing took place in periods which may be defined in three phases – 1840-48; 1863-68 and 1877-1880, the middle period being principally at Rathmanna to the east of the town. This infrequency was not shared with the other primary courses in the county, even if the others did also have some years without racing. In reality, like other sports horse racing was transient until it had a fixed venue. Patronage in the form of borrowing land for meetings could only sustain it so far. This also helps us to understand the early proliferation of meetings. There were many meetings while racing moved around from home to home, but there were fewer meetings once courses became fixed and regulated.

[43] *Tipperary Vindicator*, 4 Oct. 1845; *Tipperary Free Press*, 23 Oct. 1852; 15 Oct. 1853.
[44] *Tipperary Free Press*, 26 Sept 1849; 29 Sept. 1849; 3 Oct. 1849.
[45] *Nenagh Guardian*, 11 Nov. 1843.
[46] *Nenagh Guardian*, 18 Nov. 1843.

More evidence of the relationship between the overlapping horse racing and hunting communities was evident in Nenagh and its wider hinterland. Racing in the vicinity of Nenagh took place at various venues. The Ormond Hunt races were a popular event with meetings from 1844 to 1849, held at Lismacrory.[47] Ardcroney, Dagg's Hill and Grennanstown were other locations which were used by both the hunt race organisers and the Nenagh race committee.[48] In the immediate aftermath of the Famine, military personnel from the 79th Cameron Highlanders, garrisoned in the local barracks, were instrumental in setting up the course, with Lieutenant Maitland acting as clerk.[49] But on the removal of this regiment from the town, military involvement was non-existent from then on. The key thing here is that the military planted the idea of horse racing in the community. They established it and got it going. The post-military success in Nenagh was that the local community took it on and continued to organise meetings. At Cahir, the military officers associated with the local garrison, also actively promoted horse racing.[50] These were widely supported and, as noted in Chapter Three, the military and the local community were to the fore in the promotion of these meetings. Similarly at Templemore, the military organised hunt race meetings, though not on such a large scale as in Cahir.[51]

At Nenagh, the lack of permanence around the whole issue of racing in the district, only served to highlight the yearly uncertainty of organising a meeting. When Dagg's Hill was offered as a venue, it was suggested that the establishment of a race for 'the Nenagh cup,' to be run at three successive meetings would ensure a race meeting 'for at least three years.'[52]

[47] *Tipperary Vindicator*, 10 Apr. 1844; 5 Apr. 1845; 21 Feb. 1846. *Tipperary Free Press*, 18 Apr. 1849.
[48] *Nenagh Guardian*, 13 Feb. 1850; 3 Apr. 1850; 22 Mar. 1854.
[49] *Nenagh Guardian*, 3 Apr. 1850.
[50] *Tipperary Free Press*, 15 Mar. 1841; 15 July 1843; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 16 May 1863; 7 May 1864; 17 Jan. 1866.
[51] *Tipperary Free Press*, 28 Dec. 1842; 4 Jan. 1843; *Nenagh Guardian*, 7 June 1865.
[52] *Nenagh Guardian*, 30 June 1855.

But this appears not to have happened.[53] In 1859, the issue of where the Nenagh races would be held appeared to have been resolved, when the Roche lands at Norwood became available. Here the course became a firm favourite with the racing community and the support of the Roche family as patrons, was regularly praised. Race organisers depended on the goodwill of land owners to permit access. James Roche was treasurer of the Norwood races from 1859.[54] In 1872, he subscribed £10 to the race funds but he received £60 for the use of the course.[55] His support also allowed for the erection of a grandstand on his lands, erection of fences and other ancillary services associated with race day, all of which were then removed once the racing was completed. Tenders were sought for the erection of stand houses almost as soon as the race articles were published.[56] Admission fees were charged to the stand, bringing in extra revenue.

Accounts for the races of 1873 showed that, for two days at Norwood, £106 19s 6d was taken from stand-house fees alone.[57] However, with an opening credit balance of £53 15s from the 1871 meeting, the treasurer closed the 1872 accounts with a credit balance of £37 0s 6d, which represented a loss on the 1872 meeting of £16 14s 6d. Though racing took place yearly, the timber used to construct the stands and ropes used to define enclosure areas, were auctioned in the aftermath of the races.[58] This suggests that there was an onus to recoup costs wherever possible and to meet the financial demands which the event incurred. It also suggests that there was no long term vision, in terms of goods investment or storage. Saloons near or underneath the stand-house were also tendered out, this time with the highest tender being accepted. Persons wishing to erect a tent, for whatever purpose were also invited to

[53] This is based on a lack of evidence in the local press.
[54] *Nenagh Guardian*, 26 Feb. 1859; 24 Mar. 1860.
[55] *Nenagh Guardian*, 22 Mar. 1873.
[56] *Nenagh Guardian*, 2 Aug. 1876; 12 July 1879
[57] *Nenagh Guardian*, 22 Mar. 1873.
[58] *Nenagh Guardian*, 22 Nov. 1879; 8 Oct 1879.

tender at the Norwood races, with receipts for 'tents and roulette' bringing in £47 for the races in 1872.[59] It was as if the overriding concern of the committees was to deal with each year as it came, without any long term planning. To this end the business community and ratepayers of Nenagh were the ones to whom the committee turned, when the race articles were published and financial support for the various events was canvassed in the town.[60] But things did not improve!

A deficiency of £52 remained after all costs had been met for the 1873 meeting, leaving the committee in a dilemma – would they publish a list of defaulters or try to get them to abide by their initial commitment.[61] But 'Subscriber' in a letter to the town newspaper took issue. He believed that the stewards and committee had already done enough by subscribing and giving their spare time in promoting the races. He felt that it was up to the 'merchants and traders' of Nenagh to subscribe the necessary funds to clear off the debts, as they were the ones who profited most from the races.[62] James Roche died in September 1873 and for a few years the races once more operated infrequently. No-one was sure if they would be held or not. Efforts were made over the next seven years to revive the meeting, but it was only successful in 1876 and 1879. On the whole, there was general lethargy from the residents of Nenagh to the races.[63] This fact did not go unnoticed by the race committee, who on the evidence of the press reports, manfully endeavoured to maintain an annual meeting but they were fighting a lost cause. It also demonstrates how fragile the whole enterprise was. Once the principal patron of Nenagh races died, it also signalled the beginning of the end for the meeting itself.

[59] *Nenagh Guardian*, 5 June 1872; 22 Mar. 1873.
[60] *Nenagh Guardian*, 10 May 1873; 12 May 1873; 28 May 1879.
[61] *Nenagh Guardian*, 8 Oct 1873; 11 Oct. 1873.
[62] *Nenagh Guardian*, 15 Nov. 1873.
[63] *Nenagh Guardian*, 13 Sept. 1876; 10 Sept. 1879. *Clonmel Chronicle*, 10 Sept. 1879.

For once, Clonmel did not take the lead in the county in relation to horse-racing. While meetings were held on courses at Anner Castle, Kilsheelan and Gammonsfield in the 1840s, horse racing was not a common feature of the local sporting landscape.[64] Attempts were made to establish one-off meetings but they did not lead to continuity. In 1871 a race committee was formed with a view to establishing annual races at Clonmel 'in compliance with the expressed wishes of many of the gentry, merchants and others resident in Clonmel.'[65] However one of those in attendance, Mr. Phillips, was of the opinion that 'unless a really good stake was offered each day, it was useless to expect that good horses would come.' He believed that such was the case at Cashel, where a plate of £130 failed to attract 'more than six or eight horses.' A tipping point had been reached. The race market had become crowded and the availability of quality horses to ensure a meeting's long term success was not there to sustain them.

However, some committee meetings continued throughout the winter months of 1871-72 covering aspects from the collection of subscriptions to securing land for the races themselves. All appeared to be in hand until the local Roman Catholic parish priest, Dr. Power, voiced his disapproval of the proposed race meeting. Such were his strong convictions against the races that the committee felt that 'those who promised subscriptions,' refused to pay when Dr. Power denounced the proposed events.[66] It was not the races as such, which Dr. Power was against, but rather the hedonistic events associated with race day. At a race meeting at Kilmacomma, near Clonmel, on 26 December 1871, there was 'a great amount of drunkenness throughout the evening, and a woman, on retiring home there from,

[64] *Tipperary Free Press*, 5 Feb. 1845; 21 June 1845; 24 Mar. 1849.
[65] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 14 Oct. 1871.
[66] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 16 Mar. 1872.

was ill-used'.[67] It was an event such as this, which bothered the priest. Forty-six members of the race committee were sent a circular to attend a meeting about these issues. Only nine attended and with support going against them, a unanimous decision was made to dissolve the committee and hand back any subscriptions. On the whole, it was felt that there was apathy in the town to the races and that 'the employers in the town were also complaining that their employees were absent from business on the following day.'

'S.R.' wrote to the *Clonmel Chronicle* highlighting the fact that he believed there were too many small races, at too many meetings. These were to the detriment of horse breeding. These races were a source of 'idleness, intemperance and crime.'[68] He proposed that one centrally located meeting should be held on a large scale annually, which would attract the best horses and be of superior sport. The problem which 'S.R.' correctly pointed out, was one of sustainability, as opposed to the spectacle of racing itself. If there was going to be poor quality racing for too little money, the whole enterprise was doomed to failure, principally due to an over-subscribed level of racing. His letter drew a quick reply from 'an old turfite' who bemoaned the folly of 'splitting up a sum of money barely sufficient for one good plate, into some six or eight miserable stakes.'[69] He supported the call of 'S.R.' for a large meeting but one which would rotate around the towns of Clonmel, Fethard, Cashel, and Tipperary, which the owners of the 'best racing blood in the country' would patronise. His pleading fell on deaf ears! By 1877, another series of races was proposed for Clonmel something which 'the very rarity of the event would ensure a large attendance and a liberal patronage'.[70] Once

[67] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 16 Mar. 1872.
[68] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 16 Dec. 1871.
[69] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 6 Jan. 1872.
[70] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 30 May 1877.

again, it was false dawn and the most that Clonmel could hope for were the local harrier club races, which were held at nearby Clerihan.[71]

Tipperary racecourse was the only course in the county where the rail network had a major bearing on the fortunes of racing in the town. The Barronstown course opening coincided with the opening of the Waterford and Limerick rail line. This company had a station at Tipperary town, connected to Limerick Junction, both places close to the new racecourse. As the plans for the railway to Cork were enacted by law in 1845, one may infer that the opening of a new race meeting at Tipperary was a commercial initiative to maximise the benefits which would accrue from the new rail link.[72] The very first train on the new line from Limerick station was to the races at Tipperary, in 1848, when 'over 400 of the inhabitants including the rank, fashion and beauty of the city' travelled on this historic occasion.[73] The Waterford and Limerick line consistently offered return fares at single rates for race followers. This made good commercial sense.[74] Not only that, the rail company also sponsored races at the Tipperary track, with the "Railway Stakes" having twenty sovereigns added when it was put on the race card in 1850.[75] By 1853, fifty sovereigns were added.[76] The symbiotic relationship between Tipperary races and the Waterford and Limerick Railway Company was great for racing but, by 1870, there were growing concerns that 'trains from the four cardinal points...brought full freights at not very moderate rates.'[77] There is no doubt that without the railway, Tipperary races would not have remained a successful venture. It was located at the intersection of two primary rail networks, Dublin to Cork and Waterford to

[71] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 16 Apr. 1879.
[72] Murray and McNeill, *Great southern and western railway*, pp 15-18.
[73] *Tipperary Free Press*, 1 Apr. 1848. Ernie Shepherd. *Waterford, Limerick and western railway* (Hersham, 2006), p. 11.
[74] *Tipperary Free Press*, 12 May 1852; 10 Sept. 1853; 20 May 1854; 29 May 1860.
[75] *Tipperary Free Press*, 30 Mar. 1850.
[76] *Tipperary Free Press*, 14 Sept. 1853.
[77] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 25 May 1870.

Limerick. It also benefitted from the support of the Waterford and Limerick Railway Company, which offered return services at single rates, in spite of concern in some quarters that the rates were not as moderate as they might have been. To the present day, Tipperary racecourse, at Limerick Junction, benefits from rail passenger traffic.

This section has looked at how race meetings became established, developed and collapsed, in the course of forty years. Central to the success of any meeting was the race committee and unless strong and motivated, such a body was doomed to failure. The inability of the committee in Clonmel to maintain sufficient members, to do the necessary work, undermined any hope it had, of ever securing subscriptions. This also hindered drawing up race articles and securing land for the races. Central to this was the involvement of the land owner on the race committee. James Roche as treasurer of the Nenagh races was key to the success of the Nenagh meeting. His death may be seen as a prime factor in the decline of the Norwood races, as family instability likely affected the future of the meeting at Norwood.[78] Similarly at Thurles, uncertain land acquisition for the races would have only impeded any hopes for continued racing. While racing was an annual event in the town in the 1840s, long periods without racing would have been difficult to counter and consequently there was an ebb and flow in relation about the regularity of racing. Horse racing needed patronage and the next two sections look at two different ways in which this was achieved. The first one relates to individual involvement, most especially that of Lord Waterford. The second, is that of a race committee at Cashel, where some of the principal players were also land owners and local businessmen, who had an eye on commerce and profit.

[78] His eldest son, Michael, committed suicide in January 1879. *Nenagh Guardian*, 13 Jan. 1879.

Marquis of Waterford

This part looks at the substantial role which the Marquis of Waterford had in the fortunes of horse-racing in county Tipperary. As a steward of the Turf Club, he appeared in this capacity at meetings, not alone in Tipperary, but throughout Ireland. But it was as a benefactor to the racing industry that he made an indelible imprint. As a purchaser of race-horses, both at auction and race meetings, he gave unparalleled support to the horse racing community of Tipperary.

Co-existent with his support of fox hunting, the principle supporter of horse racing in the county was Henry de la Poer Beresford, the 3rd Marquis of Waterford. He contributed prizes to several meetings. At the New Melton (New Inn) races, in June 1840, he donated a twenty sovereign plate. He put up fifty sovereigns for the sweepstakes and ten sovereigns for a farmers' race at the same location in October 1840. Later in November, he followed this up with an unsolicited ten sovereign purse for the farmer's race at Carrick-on-Suir.[79] His support of farmers' races never waned. In 1853, in a sweepstakes race of one sovereign at Carrick-on-Suir races, he added ten sovereigns in a race 'for farmers' horses residing in his hunting district.'[80] At this time, an unmarried farm servant receiving food and lodgings, earned £4 per year. A landless labourer earned from eight pence to one shilling per day, or four pence to six pence, if he also received food. When times were not so good, this rate was lower.[81]

The support of the Marquis for horse racing suggests that he never forgot the important aspect which the farming community played, as guardians of the countryside and by

[79] Fifty sovereigns in 1840, equates to £3,983 in 2012. Ten sovereigns is the equivalent of £802.70 in 2012, calculations carried out on Measuring Worth.com website. Online http://www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/ (Accessed 6 April 2014). *Tipperary Free Press*, 5 June 1841; 6 Oct. 1841; 30 Oct. 1841; 13 Nov. 1841.
[80] *Tipperary Free Press*, 12 Feb. 1853.
[81] John W. Boyle 'A marginal figure: the Irish rural laborer' in Samuel Clark and James J. Donnelly Jnr. *Irish peasants: violence and political unrest 1780-1914* (Dublin, 1983), p. 313.

extension, guardians of fox coverts, earths and the hunting country. These races gave farmers an opportunity to share the race course with the Marquis and other notables. It also gave them an opportunity to put on display, a hunter which may attract the attention of a likely purchaser, and enhance their income by the fortuitous selling of a good horse. Though many races were selling races, whereby the winner was sold in the ring immediately after a race, the opportunity for farmers to make a handsome return on a horse was important. At the conclusion of the races at Tipperary, in April 1849, Lord Waterford purchased *Sir Arthur* for 250 guineas and *Bracelet* for 100 guineas adding to his already considerable stable.[82] At the Cashel races, in October 1850, he purchased *The Hermit* after this horse won two heats of the last race on the card.[83]

In his capacity as steward, Lord Waterford appeared at meetings all over Tipperary not just those in the south of the county. By appearing as steward of a provincial race meeting, members of the Turf Club in this capacity gave their imprimatur to these meetings. This means that the meeting organisers were happy and willing to defer contentious decisions to what was now turning out to be an increasing deference of rural meetings to a central body, which was the Turf Club. Some of the race meetings where the Marquis appeared as steward were the Cahir steeple chases in October 1843, the Lismacrory course for the Ormond and King's County steeple chase and flat races in April 1844, and at the Anner Castle course for the Clonmel races in May 1845.[84] With jockeys wearing the blue colours of the Marquis, his horses regularly won. While he had two winners at the Carrick-on-Suir races, in May 1842,

[82] *Tipperary Free Press*, 14 Apr. 1849. £250 in 1850 equated to £22,640 in 2012. £100 in 1850 equated to £9,054 in 2012, calculations carried out on Measuring Worth.com website. Online: http://www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/ (Accessed 6 April 2014).
[83] *Tipperary Free Press*, 2 Oct. 1850.
[84] *Tipperary Free Press*, 2 Sept. 1843; *Nenagh Guardian*, 13 Apr. 1844; *Tipperary Free Press*, 21 May 1845.

he lost a brown gelding *Manilla* at the New Melton steeplechase race in late October 1842.[85] But undeterred the Marquis travelled to Naas, Co. Kildare a few weeks later for the stud sale of the late Captain Madden, and purchased five horses for 980 guineas.[86] The scale of his expenditure 'surprised everyone,' with one of the horses *Navigator* being knocked down to him for 300 guineas. He indulged his passion for horse racing and was without question, the most influential figure in the racing community of Tipperary at this time. He was a steward of the Turf Club from 1841 until his death in 1859.[87] His attendance at a race meeting was sure to attract many visitors to the course just to see him and his entourage. When he attended the Thurles races in November 1841, he was 'accompanied by several distinguished and sporting visitors and was repeatedly cheered by the crowd.'[88] An added source of wonderment was the presence of 'one of the Lord Waterford's vans for the conveyance of his stud, drawn by four horses...and [this] excited the curiosity of the people.' This type of van had become popular in England in the late 1830s, negating the need for horses to be walked to meetings.[89] It was common for horses to only compete at local courses, whereby little walking was required but Waterford's van gave him an extra dimension allowed him extend the scope of his racing hinterland. This was an important moment, where technology allowed sport to spread geographically and it was similar to transportation innovations evident in England, with jockeys moving between racecourses by means of the rail network. Horse transport vans were also employed to ferry horses from stable to racecourse.[90]

The untimely death of Lord Waterford, at the age of forty-seven, as a result of a fall from his horse *Mayboy*, in 1859, while returning home from a hunt meet, was a great loss to the

[85] *Tipperary Free Press*, 2 Nov. 1842.
[86] *Tipperary Free Press*, 30 Nov. 1842.
[87] D'Arcy. *Horses, lords and racing men*, pp 347-8.
[88] *Tipperary Free Press*, 13 Nov. 1841.
[89] Huggins. *Flat racing*, p. 25.
[90] Vamplew. *The turf*, pp 31-2.

sporting scene of Tipperary, especially with horse racing and hunting. There were many people who were in awe of him, as he travelled from one race meeting to another and the conspicuous consumption which he lavished on his horse racing interests, ensured that many others aspired to move within his circle. But it was the quality of his horses and his stud which were his enduring assets. His horses won many races around Ireland and the Marquis purchased widely. His successor, while still a supporter of horse racing was not as flamboyant as the 3rd Marquis. He was one of the primary supporters of horse racing in Tipperary in the years 1840-1859.

Cashel Racecourse

This section chronicles the events and happenings at Cashel racecourse from 1840 to 1880. It demonstrates how the importance of this course to the racing community went from one of high esteem to one of low support, during the period, mainly on account of an increasing number of race meetings. The role of the land owner is investigated. Modifications to the course are noted and these give a flavour of the means by which the local community went to to ensure that racing returned to Cashel annually. Lastly, patronage was a key element in the sporting process and evolution, and to this end, the role played by the parliamentary representatives, town commissioners and other patrons is also explored.

As previously noted, Cashel held a series of races in 1732. It is quite likely that at this date the races were held in the townland, south of Cashel, which bore the name Racecourse.[91] In

[91] In 1850, the Racecourse Demesne was held by Avary Jordan from Cashel Town Commissioners. Richard Griffith. *General valuation of rateable property in Ireland: County of Tipperary, south riding. Barony of Middlethird.* (Dublin, 1851), p. 159. See also Denis G. Marnane. 'John Davis White's sixty years in Cashel' in *Tipperary Historical Journal 2001*, p. 69.

September 1788, the races lasted for five days, though the number of races was small.[92] In the following year, the races were spread out over six days, with fifty pounds on offer for the winner of each race, except for the last race, which was for £100.[93] The races of 1797 started on Monday, 16, and continued until Saturday, 21 October.[94] In 1844, it was stated that 'the last day of the old celebrated Cashel Races was the 15 October 1797.'[95] For most of the first half of the nineteenth century the races were held at various locations, including Kilbreedy, near Camas and Killeenastina, immediately west of a townland named Racecourse.[96] But unlike that of the racecourse at Thurles, there is no racecourse identified on the 1840 map for the Cashel location. The Cashel races of November 1840, took place on a course 'lately chosen' at Templenoe, an area of land within the Killeenastina townland.[97] The course was not deemed as suitable as that at the Commons of Cashel.

Another course was laid out north-west of the town, for the 1844 meeting. This course with 'artificial jumps arranged in sporting style' also attracted liberal patronage with the county MP, Nicholas Maher, contributing £20 and Cashel commissioners gave a £50 plate.[98] Maher also owned the land on which the Thurles racecourse was sited.[99] In 1845, the borough MP, Timothy O'Brien also contributed to the race fund, starting a trend which would continue until the borough constituency was disenfranchised in 1868 and abolished in 1870.[100] Cashel

[92] *Freeman's Journal*, 21 Oct. 1788.
[93] *Freeman's Journal*, 29 Sept. 1789.
[94] Edward and James Weatherby. *Racing calendar containing an account of the plates, matches and sweepstakes run for in Great Britain and Ireland in the year 1797* (London, 1798), pp 178-80.
[95] *Tipperary Free Press*, 19 Oct. 1844.
[96] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 26 Sept. 1873.
[97] *Tipperary Free Press*, 14 Nov. 1840.
[98] *Nenagh Guardian*, 19 Oct 1844; *Tipperary Free Press*, 19 Oct. 1844.
[99] Richard Griffith. *General valuation of rateable property in Ireland. County of Tipperary, north riding. Barony of Eliogarty*. (Dublin, 1852), p. 97.
[100] Catherine Fogarty. 'The disenfranchisement of the boroughs of Cashel and Sligo'. Unpublished MA thesis. National University of Maynooth, 2000, pp 143-164.

borough had a population of 6,971 in 1831, which had, by 1861 fallen to 5,458.[101] The land on which the course was laid out was at Freaghduff and it encompassed part of Eastlone. In 1850, William Ryall had ninety-one acres of rented land from the Earl of Normanton, at Freaghduff and in the adjoining townland of Eastlone, James Dunne had thirty-seven acres rented from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.[102] This land, in both instances, was church land, Normanton, while archbishop of Cashel having made advantageous leases. The Ryall and Dunne names were synonymous with Cashel races over the next thirty years.

The Ryall family were instrumental in establishing Cashel races at this site, as James Ryall was operating in a semi-professional capacity, as clerk of the course. He was also a hotel proprietor in Cashel. In 1841, he was taking entries for the re-established meeting and by 1844 was named as clerk of the course for a three day meeting, with a prize fund of £410 for a total of six races.[103] Entries were received by him at the hotel, where he also received a fee of five shillings for each horse entered 'free and £10 plates excepted.'[104] His fees were on a par with those received by clerks in England.[105] Added income was earned with an 'ordinary' held each evening in the hotel, at the conclusion of the races.[106] While it is unknown, and rather unlikely, that Ryall worked for a salary, mindful that the Cashel races took place yearly, he had enough irons in the fire to draw substantial income from his various interests – land owner; clerk of the course; and hotel owner.

[101] Fogarty. 'The boroughs of Cashel and Sligo,' p. 47.
[102] Griffith. *General valuation. Barony of Middlethird*, pp 170-1. For the Earl of Normanton see *Debrett's illustrated peerage and baronetage* (London, 1865), p. 260.
[103] *Tipperary Free Press*, 2 Oct. 1841; 4 Sept. 1844.
[104] *Tipperary Free Press*, 19 Sept. 1846.
[105] Huggins, *Flat racing*, p.159.
[106] An ordinary was an after race function, inclusive of a meal, which typically took place at a local hotel.

There was also a social cachet associated with the role of race steward or race official. Among the ten stewards at the 1846 meeting in Cashel, were the Marquis of Waterford, Lord Lismore, Viscount de Chabot, Hon. C. O'Callaghan and Nicholas V. Maher MP, all principal land owners in mid and south Tipperary, Cork and Waterford.[107] Not only that, the prize money of £100 added to the Rock Stakes – a sweepstakes of fifteen sovereigns each – would on the face of it, appear to have been a very large sum, to assign to a horse race, mindful of the distress which many people were then experiencing. The support of Cashel commissioners and politicians was instrumental in attracting entries as well as giving support to the races themselves. Essentially the town commissioners were also acting as financial backers for the races. By hosting a big sporting event, they were attracting additional revenue into the town, adding to the prestige of such a day. The Cashel commissioners also contributed fifty sovereigns to the 1846 meeting, all in the interest of promoting the town.[108] This was not something unique to Cashel. Clonmel Corporation also held a series of races in late 1844.[109] With large visitor numbers attracted by the races, the outlay was paid back in kind with consumer spending raising extra revenue in the town.[110] Advertisements were taken out in the local press by hotel owners. One such owner noted that he was 'grateful for the kind patronage bestowed on his establishment.'[111]

Races were typically held over two days, with two races each day. There was a mixture of flat races and jump races. The county and borough members of parliament felt the need to be present at the meeting. It did them no harm to be seen at an event enjoyed by ordinary people.

[107] There are no race meetings from county Tipperary recorded in W. Ruff. *Guide to the turf for 1847: spring edition* (London, 1847), pp 139-56. The Cashel results for 1847 appear in the W. Ruff. *Guide to the turf for 1848* (London, 1847), p. 144
[108] *Tipperary Free Press*, 3 Oct. 1846.
[109] *Tipperary Free Press*, 4 Dec. 1844.
[110] Huggins. *Flat racing*, p. 144.
[111] *Tipperary Free Press*, 19 Sept. 1846

Both county members, Nicholas Maher and Francis Scully were in attendance at the 1846 meeting. From 1852 to 1855, the two county members and the two borough members were among those listed as stewards.[112] Sir Timothy O'Brien, the Cashel borough member, contributed twenty-five sovereigns yearly to one of the races.

As races were run in heats at this period, with the winner of two heats declared the victor, it was not unusual that three races were required to get an eventual winner. To this end, the race articles at several meetings, typically noted that the winners of the first and second heats, would be the only ones to race over a third and final heat.[113] But when a horse was entered for a few races, it was required to do quite an amount of racing. At the Cashel October meet, in 1852, Lord Waterford's *Augustine* raced in six heats over two successive days, in winning 'cleverly' the two races in which the horse was entered.[114] Though artificial fences were part of the initial layout, the course owners also incorporated walls into the jumps, one of which regularly caused falls, which were often fatal. One such fatality was that of the jockey Colgan who was killed when his horse *Crutches* rolled over him in October 1852.[115] Several reports noted the severity of this obstacle and the course owners at various stages attempted to remedy the difficulty.[116] This new course, at Freaghduff, from the outset had a stand house which was 'a substantial stone building' near which were 'the vehicles of many of our gentry...the Rock – glorious memorial of other days – towered proudly in the distance and the crowds of our fair countrywomen' thronged the hills adjacent to it.[117] Naturally the best viewing areas of the course were reserved for carriages, all facing the landmark icon, which was the Rock of Cashel cathedral.

[112] *Tipperary Free Press*, 23 Oct. 1852; 15 Oct. 1853; 18 Oct. 1854; 26 Sept. 1855.
[113] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 6 May 1865; 12 May 1866.
[114] *Tipperary Free Press*, 23 Oct. 1852
[115] *Tipperary Free Press*, 23 Oct. 1852.
[116] *Nenagh Guardian*, 5 Oct. 1867; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 4 Oct. 1871
[117] *Tipperary Free Press*, 2 Oct. 1847.

Since 1853, Robert J. Hunter, Turf Club judge had been officiating at various meetings around Tipperary. By the time Paul Cusack became clerk at Cashel, in 1859, Hunter had been a regular official at the meeting. The fortunes of Cashel races waned in the mid-1850s, with no meeting taking place in 1857. James Ryall's last appearance as clerk of the course was in 1858. At that meeting, he was assisted by Cusack in his capacity as superintendant of the on-course arrangements.[118] Cusack succeeded Ryall as clerk.[119] A race committee was then established in the town and with the able assistance of John M. Bushe, Rockwell subscriptions were obtained and the races were widely promoted.[120] For the races of 1865, James Dunne subscribed £50 towards the race funds.[121]

These efforts paid handsome dividends locally, as the 1859 meeting drew 'lovers of the turf from all parts of the country,' with the attendance 'immense.'[122] Still the committee refused to sit still, and for the 1860 meeting, the stand house was improved with accommodation for one thousand people. To meet the demands for accommodation external to the racecourse, 'the chief business [in the town] was the letting of almost every spare room in private houses and public place of resort, at enormous prices.'[123] Coupled with the business done by car owners the races were commercial in every sense of the word, though there is no evidence to suggest that such businessmen contributed to the race funds as was happening in England.[124] James Dunne, a hotel proprietor in the town and Paul Cusack were, by 1861, the new course owners and they made great strides in improving the course, fences and stand-house, (see Figure 19).

[118] *Tipperary Examiner*, 28 Aug. 1858.
[119] *Tipperary Free Press*, 5 Aug. 1859.
[120] *Tipperary Examiner*, 23 Jan. 1858.
[121] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 9 Aug. 1865.
[122] *Tipperary Free Press*, 30 Sept. 1859.
[123] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 28 Sept. 1861.
[124] Huggins, *Flat racing*, p. 149.

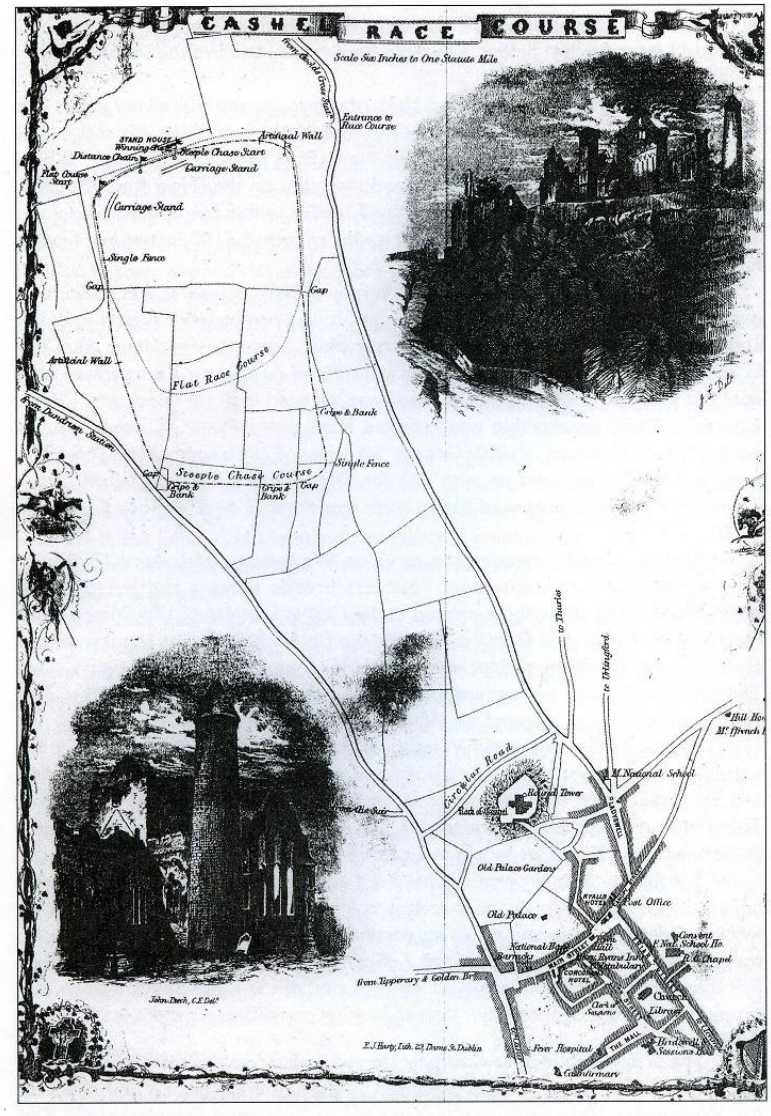

Figure 19: Cashel racecourse layout, 1861 (Source: Boherlahan-Dualla Journal 2000)

In spite of these advances, it would have been difficult to obtain sponsorship for a second meeting. The September 1862 meeting at the 'Downs of Cashel,' with still more improvements made by Cusack and Dunne to the course design and layout, were looked forward to eagerly. On race day, 'the ring' was never 'more crowded or fashionably filled,' while 'if the sporting men were numerous the horses were also numerous.'[125] All boded well for a great day's racing, or so it seemed! The first event on the card failed to fill, though the articles noted that four horses were to start or there would be no race. Nine entries had been

[125] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 1 Oct. 1862.

received but only four came to the start line, when one of them unexpectedly withdrew. So as not to disappoint those attending, the stewards waived the conditions of the articles and dictated that three horses could run, thus not leaving a blank on the card. The race then turned into a farce when two more horses withdrew, thus leaving *Frailty* to walk over the course.[126] The *Clonmel Chronicle* in its report noted that, 'we could well see the *drift* of all this. We have but to *chronicle* that things could not be made "comfortable" for the four gentlemen who held back.' Clearly the whole episode revolved around gambling and those in the know, under the principle of play or pay, were going to get their money's worth, largely at the expense of an unsuspecting public. This sharp practice, while unsportsmanlike, happened regularly.[127] The key issue here was the lack of regulation regarding gambling. Racing was not merely a sport to be administered but was, unlike other sports, an occasion for gambling. This was its whole reason for existing. That is why there was a great need for regulation in and around racing, before any of the other principal sports in Ireland were regulated and codified.

The carnivalesque atmosphere of the Cashel races was one of its key attractions. Over the years the lower classes attended in large numbers, especially in 1863, when an estimated 40,000 people attended the meeting. It was remarked that the early harvest afforded the tenant farmers and peasantry an opportunity to attend.[128] Inclement weather caused the second day of the meeting to be postponed for one day, not that Cashel business people were overly concerned, as they 'reaped a golden harvest,' with the shops and streets over-crowded with race goers who had nowhere else to go, while on the course, '*canvas quarter* looked bleak

[126] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 1 Oct. 1862.
[127] Huggins, *Flat racing*, p. 24.
[128] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 30 Sept. 1863.

and drear.'[129] Tents erected for the sale of alcohol, food, or other consumables were part of the race day experience and added to the gaiety and excitement. The stall holders provided increased revenue for the course owners. A woman from Charleville, Co. Cork who sold ginger bread at the 1861 races, came before the magistrates, as she tried to make light of the purse of another seller in her vicinity. After getting 'unceremoniously ejected,' she accused Patrick Maunsell of assault only to have the case dismissed due to a lack of evidence.[130] But what this case shows is that people were prepared to travel considerable distances to sell their wares at the races; the course owners and race organisers made a handsome income from pitches allocated to tent holders; and a large amount of alcohol was consumed on the grounds. For the races of the following year James Dunne issued a notice 'that he will *require* all tents to be settled on the day before the races.'[131]

Alcohol induced disorder resulted in individuals appearing before the magistrates.[132] Rioting was a more serious matter and at the 1865 meeting, seven men appeared before the magistrates. They received sentences ranging from twelve months to nine months with hard labour with their attempt to revive faction fighting.[133]

Horse racing differed from other recreational sport in the county and indeed Ireland and Great Britain, in that apart from the sporting aspect, it brought with it drunkenness, gambling, debauchery and sometimes violence. The Victorian era was very pre-disposed to law and order, rules and regularity, whether in the workplace, the market place or the sports ground. However, racing by the nature of the travelling circus which followed it, often deviated from

[129] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 3 Oct. 1863.
[130] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 12 Oct. 1861.
[131] *Cashel Gazette*, 9 Sept. 1865.
[132] *Cashel Gazette*, 30 Sept. 1865; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 5 Oct. 1869.
[133] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 28 Oct. 1865.

these ideals. While the racing people who owned, trained and maintained horses, be it recreational or commercial interests, supported racing for what it was. There was another large body of race day patrons for whom a day at the races was the primary appeal. There were tents available for alcohol and food, side show amusements and confidence trickster. Stall holder were anxious to take as much money from race day patrons as they could get away with. An over indulgence in alcohol was one of the principal causes of unrest and, as has been shown, this led to many instances of drunkenness and custodial sentences for individuals prosecuted before the courts.[134]

More worryingly, though, was the reduction of the yearly grant from the commissioners to the Cashel race fund. They cut their subscription from £40 down to £25.[135] While meetings were generally well supported by all classes in society, a decline in the attendance of the peasant and labouring classes was attributed to emigration. Furthermore, a lack of support for the 1868 meeting was put down to 'the present number of "small" events' which the *Clonmel Chronicle* opined was 'calculated to promote the interests of steeplechase racing.'[136] Things improved considerably in 1869, with 'an enormous and fashionable attendance of the aristocracy and true lovers of the turf' present with the seventy-six acres well filled with people.[137] An added revenue source that year was the charge of 2*s* 6*d* admission at the gate for mounted horsemen. But, in 1870, matters reverted to farce once more. The writing was on the wall as far as Cashel races were concerned. It was felt that indeed 'the days of small events in the racing world are numbered - we cannot afford to bid "farewell" to the Old

[134] *Tipperary Free Press*, 7 Aug. 1850; *Nenagh Guardian*, 11 May 1862, 5 Aug. 1868; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 16 June 1868.
[135] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 9 Sept. 1865.
[136] *Clonmel Chronicle* 23 Sept. 1868.
[137] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 5 Oct. 1869.

Rock.'[138] There was £370 added to various races but even the celebrated Rock Stakes failed to fill the required number of horses for the race to go ahead.

Aside from emigration, the want of a railway line was also given as a reason which would impact on the ability of local meetings to survive. The race committee agreed that something radical had to be done and into the breach stepped Thomas G. Waters. Waters altered the course and made changes to the paddock area. He also made improvements to the stand house. These improvements did cost money and as a result admission fees to the stand house were increased, as was the fee for carriages.[139] Efforts were made to keep the races an annual affair, with Waters still engaged as course manager. The engagement of Waters as a manager is another example of the economic impact of a racecourse. A job had now been created and someone was required to fill the position. However, by 1874, the Cashel race meeting was abandoned due to a lack of funds and also the after-effects of an assault on James Dunne, long time clerk of the course and secretary to the race committee. On his return from the Williamstown races he received a fracture to his skull after being struck on the head with a stone while looking out the window of the train.[140] As the borough was disenfranchised, there was no local MP to contribute to the race funds. Furthermore the auditor disallowed the granting of '£25 yearly by the Town Commissioners' to the race funds.[141] The Cashel races were now a hard sell and try as they might, the race committee could not get the meeting back to the glories of former years. Local hunt races were commenced in 1873 and for the remainder of the period, these were the staple events which Cashel offered a largely disinterested racing public.[142]

[138] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 12 Oct. 1870.
[139] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 4 Oct. 1871.
[140] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 2 May 1874; 9 May 1874.
[141] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 19 Aug. 1874.
[142] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 15 Nov. 1873.

The days of the Rock Stakes with 100 sovereigns or more in added money were gone. The most on offer was a handicap race of forty sovereigns, and other races carrying even less prize money. The scheduling of races also changed - they now took place in spring to coincide with the end of the hunting season. Though the quality of the racehorses also declined, the continued presence of a large number of 'tents' and 'book makers' was an indication of the ongoing appeal of the races.[143] But the meeting was in an untenable position. With falling attendances and not enough horses taking part, the appeal of the Cashel races was gone. The local press lamented the decline of Cashel races from its glory days half a century earlier.

The question remains, why Cashel? The development of the rail network throughout Tipperary coincided with the emergence of a new racecourse outside a town which was initially signalled as an intermediary stop on the new Great Southern and Western Railway line, which connected Dublin to Cork. Shares for this new venture were referred to as 'Cashels' owing to the name of the proposed end station in the initial 1844 Act.[144] In the end, the line did not come even come close to Cashel, though the town was on the main Dublin to Cork roadway. Economically, it was felt that, the town 'suffered in prosperity from the competition of other towns' due to the lack of railway communication.[145] The new GS&WR line went close to Tipperary town, which was on the Waterford and Limerick railway line, so that the town and its environs were doubly serviced by the rail network. It was the Waterford and Limerick Railway which immediately and regularly thereafter, supported the races at Tipperary. While it is also true that the Nenagh races at Norwood and the Ormond and King's County hunt races at Lismacrory were also remote from a rail network, the race committee at

[143] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 25 Apr. 1877; 15 May 1878.
[144] Murray and McNeill. *Great southern and western railway*, p. 15. Denis Marnane. 'The coming of the railway to county Tipperary in 1848' in *Tipperary Historical Journal 1998*, pp 139-40.
[145] Bassett. *Tipperary: a guide and directory 1889*, p. 209.

Nenagh worked with the rail company to facilitate racegoers. Horses were transported on the Great Southern rail line to Nenagh return at single fare rates. Clonmel and Thurles, in spite of intermittent difficulties, were also able to maintain a presence in the racing community, aided in no small part by the assistance of the rail companies.[146]

The Fethard races, over the Kilnockin course, while sufficient for the Tipperary Hunt race meetings, failed to galvanise continued support like Cashel. Cashel races with an invented nostalgia for the halcyon days of the late eighteenth century, were established by like minded middle class individuals, who appreciated the commercial benefits which could accrue from careful race management and upper class support. That such support was willingly given by the Marquis of Waterford and others, allied to the attractive race money on offer, only served to enhance the reputation of the Cashel meeting. When patronage was withdrawn, and specifically financial support, the races lost their glamour. Cashel was not alone in this respect. Racing throughout Ireland was to enter a difficult period with the onset of land agitation and an 'economic depression [which] finished Londonderry in the early 1880s' symptomatic of the distress felt nationwide.[147] But sport was about commercialisation and profit maximisation. With rail companies willing to offer attractive rates for other venues, Cashel was going to be hindered before the race articles were even published. The main problem with Cashel was that it was in some ways a prime example of land speculation. A recommencement of racing coincided with the development of the rail network, which ultimately bypassed the town. The meeting was able to sustain itself until the racing market became saturated with poor quality races and the money required to underpin the Cashel meeting was lost. The loss of the projected railway was a key element in the demise of the Cashel races. That it had the support of the local hunt community meant that the racecourse

[146] *Clonmel Chronicle,* 15 Aug. 1877; 3 Nov. 1880.
[147] D'Arcy. *Horses, lords and racing men*, p. 197.

owners and supporters in Cashel had to re-invent themselves and amend their calendar and adjust profit forecasts accordingly. Evidently, local hunt racing was better than no racing at all.

This section has looked at Cashel racecourse in detail, as an example of how the fortunes of one facility rose and fell, during the period under review. Clearly from the 1840s, there was a great need and support for the Cashel races. The races brought much wanted trade, commerce and money into the town, at a time when the country was about to be ravaged by famine. The various clerks of the course did not rest on their laurels, as they sought to enhance the race day experience with adjustments to the course and facilities. The role of the parliamentary members who supported the races annually and specifically the Cashel members gave added prestige to the meeting. But when the borough was disenfranchised, the meeting lost out financially. With no parliamentary members to add their weight and support, the meeting was facing new problems. When the town commissioners also withdrew financial support, the ability of the meeting to survive was greatly undermined and it lost its status and terminally decline.

Turf Club Involvement

Horse racing could not operate independently and this may be seen by the role played by the Turf Club personnel in Tipperary racing. As has been seen with Lord Waterford, in his capacity as steward, he officiated at meetings countywide. This analysis seeks to identify other individuals who had an influential role in the development of horse-racing in Tipperary. The importance of the Turf Club to the thesis is that it is the first instance of federation in matters relating to Tipperary sport, and which was centrally controlled from their offices at

the Curragh. The thesis examines the role of Turf Club personnel in Tipperary racing and the extent to which horse-racing was improved by their involvement.

There was a hiatus in the Ormond Hunt races from 1847 and 1848, with an apparent suspension of racing on account of the Great Famine but normal service was resumed in 1849, with a meeting scheduled for Lismacrory. This was the last meeting at this location until April 1854.[148] At this time, the military departed Nenagh and the lack of evidence suggests that the administration and organisational capabilities associated with the races went with them. Racing took place at Grennanstown in 1850, but no more hunt races were held until 1854, when Lismacrory was again the venue. Here, they were under the watchful eye of Robert J. Hunter, judge and handicapper to the Turf Club. Though racing did not stop in the famine years, it was curtailed especially, in 1847. The only location which held meetings each year of the Famine period was Cashel.[149]

What this evidence suggests, is that there were two parallel worlds in Tipperary. There was the commercialisation of horse racing in Cashel and Tipperary on the one hand but yet at the other end of the scale people were dying from hunger. While people in Tipperary did feel the effects of the Famine, the degree to which destitution and emigration followed was not as hard felt in this county as it was in counties on the western seaboard. The landed and business interests in Tipperary contributed to famine relief funds, in a sense fulfilling their moral obligation to subscribe but then life continued as normal.[150] The Famine was socio-economic specific leaving categories of people unaffected. Cottiers died. Poorer tenants had the

[148] *Tipperary Free Press*, 18 Apr. 1849.
[149] *Tipperary Vindicator*, 4 Oct. 1845, 3 Oct. 1846; *Tipperary Free Press*, 2 Oct. 1847, 23 Sept. 1848, 26 Sept 1849; 29 Sept. 1849; 3 Oct. 1849
[150] For instance John Bagwell and the Malcolmson brothers contributed £100 each to the Clonmel Relief Fund in February 1847. *Tipperary Free Press*, 6 Feb. 1847. The Marquis of Waterford gave £100 to the destitute of Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, while also contributing to the poor in other districts where he had property. *Tipperary Free Press*, 16 May 1846.

opportunity to emigrate or go to the workhouse, everyone else managed to survive. A visitor to Cashel, in 1850, was 'painfully struck with the number of deserted shops [and] as he left ... he passed by a legion of cabins of every variety of mud architecture.'[151] This is evidence of the type of housing which the agricultural and labouring classes had to contend with.

In light of the economic implications of the Great Famine, and the degree of unease and hardship which accompanied it, these factors contributed to a decline in racing countywide, in the late 1840s. Once racing started to become re-established in the wake of the Famine, one of Robert Hunter's earliest appearances in the Tipperary racing scene was at the Carrick-on-Suir races, in March 1853.[152] Hunter, a member of a family long associated with horse racing in Ireland, and the Curragh in particular, was the Keeper of the Match Book at the Turf Club from 1865 to 1885.[153] From 1853 to 1863, Hunter attended as a judge and/or handicapper at twenty-five race meetings throughout Tipperary. This rose to a minimum of thirty-seven attendances by the end of 1876. There was nothing philanthropic in his actions, as his position as judge also paid financial dividends. The winner of each race, where he officiated, was dictated by the race articles to pay him one sovereign.[154] His appearance on the Tipperary racing scene as elsewhere, was indicative of the course proprietors and promoters bowing to the regulatory influence emanating from the Curragh. It also demonstrates the degree to which rural meetings were now deferring to the Turf Club for leadership. Racing at this time was becoming more centralised and the Turf Club was now the arbitration body for horse racing in Ireland and the various meetings nationwide reflected this. It was not that there was no local leadership, but as weight-for-age races, were being run less and less, a knowledgeable handicapper and judge was beneficial necessary for meetings,

[151] Quoted in Denis Marnane. *Cashel: history and guide.* (Dublin, 2007), p. 92.
[152] *Tipperary Free Press*, 19 Mar. 1853.
[153] D'Arcy. *Horses, lords and racing men*, pp 38-41, 354.
[154] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 23 Aug. 1865; 11 Aug. 1866; 1 Sept 1869. *Nenagh Guardian*, 5 June 1872.

which aspired to attract the better horses, owners, and ultimately money. Furthermore, many steeplechase and hunt races were now being run under the rules of the Irish National Hunt Steeplechase Committee.[155]

Another man who became associated with the developing racing industry was Thomas G. Waters. Waters made his initial appearances in the county at Cashel racecourse for the 1871 meeting in his capacity as manager, after the stewards had 'taken the ground into their own hands for the occasion.'[156] Waters was a 'well-known racecourse official and architect,' who also redesigned Punchestown and Ballybrit, Co. Galway racecourses, in 1861 and 1869 respectively.[157] He also attended to the development of yet another new racecourse near Tipperary town, where he designed the layout at the Brookville course, turning 'the sod where the different fences were to be made. He also gave directions as to the erection of the stand-house.'[158] Throughout the 1870s, Waters made many appearances on the Tipperary racing circuit, appearing as manager in the race articles for Cashel, Tipperary, Thurles and Newport.[159] In this respect, he 'combined his work as [a] racecourse designer with all sorts of official and semi-official appointments up and down the country.'[160] It is likely that Waters quickly recognised that his experience in racecourse design and management, would stand him in great stead and to this extent he was, for all intents and purposes, a full time racing official. He was paid by the various race organisers around the country. At the Nenagh Norwood races, in 1873, he redesigned the course by making it smaller, which meant that spectators would see more of the action. He also designed the stand-house on the

[155] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 13 Apr. 1870; 11 Sept. 1872.
[156] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 4 Oct. 1871.
[157] Watson. *Between the flags*, p. 73; Welcome, *Irish horse-racing*, pp 43, 45, 104-5; F.P.M. Hyland. *History of Galway races.* (London, 2008), p. 45.
[158] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 5 Oct. 1872; *Nenagh Guardian*, 23 Oct. 1872.
[159] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 5 Oct. 1872; 7 June 1873; 28 Apr. 1877. *Nenagh Guardian*, 17 Mar. 1877.
[160] Welcome, *Irish horse-racing*, p. 56.

'Punchestown model.'[161] Six years later he was once more invited back to Nenagh, where the race committee deemed that 'Mr. Waters is a necessity and in himself a great element in any races whose course is under his skilful management.'[162] It was further argued that race-horse owners have 'the fullest confidence in the safety of any course under his management.' Waters for his part was more than happy to oblige, noting that 'should the committee trust the carrying out of the details to him and his son' he would endeavour to give complete satisfaction.

The Hunter and Waters names were synonymous with horse racing in Ireland. Their roles in officiating at meetings throughout Tipperary was indicative of the professional approach which was undertaken by the Turf Club in relation to the management of the sport in Ireland. While it is true, that some of the marquee meetings at the Curragh, Punchestown, Baldoyle, and Cork Park racecourses attracted the leading owners and horses, for the sport to also have merit in a local context, it required local personnel. These men organised themselves into a committee to do the ground work and establish subscription funds, mark out the land, and a whole range of other ancillary services to make the meeting successful. To ensure its success, men of the calibre of Hunter and Waters, brought with them, knowledge and experience as well as added value by their presence. This was something which the Nenagh committee were all too aware of though, by then, the halcyon days of racing at Norwood were fading fast into memory.

The Hunter family was now in an enviable position as racing administrators. From 1805, as 'proprietor and publisher of the Irish *Racing Calendar*' Robert Hunter continued a familial

[161] *Nenagh Guardian*, 17 May 1873.
[162] *Nenagh Guardian*, 28 May 1879.

association with horse racing in Ireland, which was to become more evident with the involvement of his son, John Ryan Hunter, and grandson Robert J. Hunter.[163]

This section has demonstrated how the emergence of a professional class within racing, who were socially elite, can inform us about gentlemen involved in racing in the mid-nineteenth century. There were professional race officials operating nationwide, from whom Tipperary racing gentlemen were prepared to accept guidance and rulings in matters of the Turf. The emergence of such judges, handicappers and course designers, demonstrates that there was a strong administrative structure within the Turf Club, which was now taking central control over racing in Ireland, to which regional officials, organisers and patrons were willing to defer.

Race-course Experiences

The festival atmosphere which horse-racing brought to a community, was one which brightened the lives of many people.[164] An overview of the race-day experience is demonstrated here, one which ranges from the music, song and dance, to the beggars and cripples seeking alms. The races were also seen as a great opportunity for thieving and violence, and this aspect of the race day is also critiqued. Coupled with this, was the whole gambling experience associated with racing, which is also explored with reference to the race goer. Racing was the only occasion when entry was freely available, to all the social classes. While the lords and ladies wined and dined in or near the standhouse, no matter how temporary the structure may have been, the lower classes found their own merriment in the tented marquees, which were erected at various areas on the course. Land owners and race

[163] *Tipperary Free Press*, 14 March 1853; *Nenagh Guardian*, 2 Sept. 1876. D'Arcy. *Horses, lords and racing men*, pp 39-40.
[164] Huggins, *Flat racing*, pp 117-122.

committees profited from the fees from the stall holders. Unlike the secluded games of country estates, race day provided a carnivalesque atmosphere, as work stopped and towns and communities, more or less came to a standstill.

In the context of this thesis, the spectator element sheds some light on the degree to which sporting occasions attracted the interest and support of all classes. Yes, there was alcohol induced merriment, but the sense of occasion and remove from work duties, was reason enough to be part of such a rare event. One annual meeting was about as much, as any community could support and in the toil of daily life, the lower classes were going to get as much enjoyment as they could. To this end, the press reports, regularly carried accounts of the large numbers which were in attendance.[165] Accounts noted that 'the bold peasantry flocked in in hundreds'; 'crowds of the peasantry "our country's pride" thronged to witness the sport'; and 'thousands of the stalworth (*sic*) peasantry of the country also thronged to the scene of the sport.'[166] When the lower classes were notable by their absence, this also was recorded.[167] Their absence was put down to the fact that many of them had emigrated.

Reports of race meetings abound with the merriment associated with the festive nature of the race day experience. With alcohol freely available, it made for a great degree of intemperance, which frequently ended up in some form of violence. At the Ormond Hunt steeplechases, in 1850, there were 'frequent scenes of drunken brawls, rioting and fighting,' even though there were '150 police on the ground.'[168] The problem was that the police were frequently outnumbered, by the sheer mass of people present. Many of these were the lower

[165] *Tipperary Free Press*, 4 Mar. 1843; 28 Mar. 1849. *Nenagh Guardian*, 1 May 1867. *Clonmel Chronicle*, 23 Sept. 1868.
[166] *Nenagh Guardian*, 22 Apr. 1843; *Tipperary Free Press*, 4 Apr. 1849; 27 July 1850.
[167] *Nenagh Guardian*, 3 Mar. 1864; 11 Apr. 1864; 19 Apr. 1865.
[168] *Nenagh Guardian*, 13 Feb. 1850.

classes who came out in their thousands to attend the races. With them, came the begging and mendicant fraternity, who lined the streets and roads leading to the race course. How genuine their claims for alms were, was also a matter of some mistrust. At the Tipperary races, in 1861, on the approach to the Barronstown course

> there is nothing to mar the view except the *objects* that meet the gaze along the route, craving, with obsolete phraseology, the charity of by-passers. We have little sympathy with such representations of misshapen humanity. Revolting scenes like those speak not to the eye of pity. They are completely out of place, and awaken only a sickening sensation when suddenly obtruded upon the visitor to a race-course. We would be far from shortening the arm of charity, but when we know the thousand-and-one contrivance, to deprive the human form of its wonted shape and manly appearance, and when we hear the rapid flow of mendicant blessings, often terminated with as eloquent a delivery of impious curses, pity wings its flight and leave behind but the traces of disgust.[169]

If these attempts at pity were one malignant aspect of the race day experience, so also was the threat of violence, typically associated with factionalism in the 1840s, which the police and military were ready and anxious to counter. 'A pitched battle was talked of between the Black Hens and Magpies' during the Ormond Hunt races of 1843 as these two factional groups shaped up to each other.[170] Tipperary was plagued with factionalism in the 1840s and '50s, and the racecourse was seen as one arena in which to pitch battle.[171] Consequently, there was regularly a large presence of police at the races, to prevent such instances from occurring, though there is no indication as to how the police presence was financed.[172]

In 1856, one of the largest riots occurred at the Templemore races, when soldiers and peasants rioted and fought each other. Early reports indicated that some soldiers had been

[169] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 29 May 1861.
[170] *Nenagh Guardian*, 22 Apr. 1843.
[171] *Nenagh Guardian*, 13 Feb. 1850; 30 Apr. 1862; 1 May 1867. *Clonmel Chronicle*, 25 May 1870. For an account of factionalism in Ireland see Patrick D. O'Donnell. *The Irish faction fighters of the 19th century* (Dublin, 1975).
[172] For example at the Cashel races, in 1859, 'there was a large force of constabulary present' yet there is no indication as to how their presence was financed. *Tipperary Free Press*, 30 Sept. 1859.

killed, though this was later disproved.[173] For their part, eleven men were sentenced to twelve months hard labour, when they came before the magistrates.[174] Another incident at Tipperary, saw Daniel Ryan indicted for the manslaughter of John Ryan at Barronstown races. He was subsequently found not guilty by the magistrates.[175] Incidences of stabbings, skull fractures and broken teeth also came before the magistrates.[176] Most of the cases revolved around drunken behaviour, which eventually became aggressive. The lesser crime of theft was also common, with pick pockets making light of people's winnings, on many occasions. Quite often the guilty party was apprehended on the course, where sentence was handed down by those assembled. In 1851, at the Clonmel garrison races 'two or three pickpockets got soundly thrashed' when caught red-handed.[177] Instances such as these, presented a moral dilemma for the gentlemen who organised racing. While their class might frown on such illegal behaviour, they financially benefitted from the race meeting itself. Stall holders needed patrons and the course owners also needed them, so that sufficient stall holders would attend and pay for their pitch areas. In essence, horse racing was an anomaly, as it was not really part of the socially improving ethic of other sports. Whereas Victorian principles of sport leaned towards a muscular Christianity philosophy of a sound mind in a sound body, it can be seen that horse racing did not conform to this ethos.

As has been noted by one leading Turf historian, the *raison d'être* of horse racing was to facilitate gambling.[178] That horse racing and gambling go hand in hand, are without question. While references to the odds for horses, at races in Tipperary county, had been given in the local press, from the eighteenth century, little evidence has been identified to suggest that

[173] *Tipperary Free Press*, 4 Apr. 1856.
[174] *Nenagh Guardian*, 2 Aug. 1856.
[175] *Nenagh Guardian*, 26 July 1862.
[176] *Tipperary Vindicator*, 2 Nov. 1844; *Nenagh Guardian*, 11 May 1862; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 16 June 1878.
[177] *Tipperary Free Press*, 16 Apr. 1841.
[178] Huggins. *Flat racing*, p. 20.

gambling impacted greatly on the livelihoods of residents in the county. One must assume that it did. If the effects of gambling affected family and work circumstances in Great Britain, then it surely had a similar impact in Ireland and by extension Tipperary. In many race reports the odds quoted were as likely to be published, more so than the name of the jockey.[179] Reports regularly noted that large sums of money changed hands in the ring. At the Cashel steeplechases, in 1859, 'in the ring the betting...was rather heavy and continuous. A considerable amount of cash changed pockets' on several occasions.[180] Not only that, the odds at Tattersalls, commonly appeared in the local press in the same column as the list of forthcoming hunt meets.[181] Newspaper editors were not slow to identify what their readers would like to see. When *Chippendale* won the Cesarewitch, in 1879, it was reported that 'an assistant in one of the grocery establishments in this town [Nenagh]' placed a bet of £1 at 20/1 and won £20, which was deemed newsworthy in the town paper.[182] Shop assistants were as likely to place a bet as anyone else, who took an interest in racing and gambling, yet only when a notable gamble was made public, did such an instance come to light. No evidence has come to light about the bookmakers operating in the towns and villages of Tipperary. But we can assume that human nature was no different to that in the rest of Great Britain and Ireland. On-course bookies and the development of the on-course telegraph, further enhanced the opportunity for gambling.[183]

This section has given an overview of the race day experience. Without doubt, gambling was very much part and parcel of race days, wherever racing took place. There were bookmakers, con-men and tricksters all ready and willing to extract as much money as they could, from

[179] See for instance Tipperary races report in *Nenagh Guardian*, 28 May 1873; 24 May 1876;
[180] *Tipperary Free Press*, 30 Sept. 1859.
[181] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 18 Dec. 1861; 12 Feb. 1862; 31 Mar. 1866; 15 Apr. 1868
[182] *Nenagh Guardian*, 8 Oct. 1879.
[183] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 23 Sept. 1868. See also Huggins. *Flat racing*, p. 27.

whomever they could. The wealthy could gamble in the ring and the lower classes could gamble with the thimble riggers and con-men. Whichever means it took, it all added to the excitement of race day, as a town came to a virtual stop, for a festival occasion. That alcohol induced violence occurred, was a lamentable feature of many race days, something which the organisers were keen to disown. But to stop it, would have meant to refuse entry to alcohol traders, which in turn would mean loss of revenue. Commercialism was the key to race day, the traders made money, the bookmakers and con-men made money, and the land-owners made money.

But yet, the main concern of the land owners and race organisers, was who controlled the profit generated from the various events and side-shows associated with race day. By roping off specific sections of the race venue to side-shows, vendors in tents and all other manner of food and beverage dealers, the course owners could rent specific sections of the venue and accrue income as could the stall owners. At Cashel, James Dunn had a rule that all money due for tents, was to be paid up front, on the day before the races.[184] One 'itinerant seller of bottled ale,' who took an action against the course owner, had his case heard before the magistrates, in the aftermath of the 1863 Cashel races.[185] Having paid 7*s* 6*d* for admission, he set up his tent 'inside the ropes,' with 'about 150 dozen of porter and ale' bottles, though he claimed to have lost about £4, when asked to move to another part of the course He was seeking to recover £8 in loss and damages. As a lone voice in a dispute with the course owner and race organisers, the evidence against him led to a dismissal of his claims. This is but one example, of the legal manoeuvres against the unregulated use of stall locations, which was encouraged by the organisers to protect their reputation and also their profit margin. That said, some committees started to come under pressure to survive, largely due to, in general,

[184] *Cashel Gazette*, 9 Sept. 1865.
[185] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 6 Jan. 1864.

an excessive number of races for small prize money, rather than incidents on course which may have generated bad publicity.

Conclusion

Horse-racing in Tipperary was the most widely supported sporting event between 1840 and 1880. No other sporting activity could match it, in terms of spectator numbers or the money required to ensure meetings were financially viable, let alone successful. This required a great input from local business and private interests, in terms of subscriptions and sponsorship. That money, was generated locally from the races is without question. The races greatly added to the local town economy, but were also such that, an annual event was as much as any town could support. There was a symbiotic relationship between horse-racing and hunting. The hunt community played a pivotal role in establishing race meetings county-wide, offering support to the farming community. As has been shown in the previous chapter, there was ongoing recognition of the value of farmers to the hunt community. This gratitude was demonstrated by the holding of farmers' races at various race meetings.

The duties of the clerk of the course meant that he was operating on a semi-professional basis. Recording entries, receiving fees, laying out the course, among other errands, necessary at race time, were attended to, with due diligence. This had to be done or events would ultimately fail. The involvement of Turf Club personnel at rural meetings, infers a move from a locally arranged meeting, to one which transferred some authority to the sports' governing body. Men of the calibre of R.J. Hunter and T.G. Waters, also brought with them prestige and bearing. That these men featured at a meeting, further reassured owners as to the merits of the organising committee, especially in the 1870s, when race meetings started to disintegrate primarily on account of ever dwindling stakes and prize money.

The data also shows that many meetings were already established, if only on an ad hoc basis, prior to the emergence of a rail network throughout Tipperary. The course at Tipperary town was the only one to consistently benefit from the railway development. The evidence supports the thesis from mainland Britain, that there was a move towards central control of horse racing in Ireland in the 1870s.[186] Mediocre racing at this time at Cashel, Tipperary and Nenagh, resulted from lesser quality horses, racing for diminishing prize money. If this was to continue, the quality of racing would suffer and this was not something which the Turf Club or Irish National Hunt Steeplechase Committee were going to allow happen.

Though horse racing and hunting to hounds, were becoming more evident in Ireland, in the eighteenth century, it was not until the nineteenth century, that their fortunes became more entwined in Tipperary. Hunt racing provided an end of season occasion for all parties, associated with the hunt community, to come together. Horse racing in the county suited the hunting community. As has been shown, 934 of the 1,154 race types identified, were steeplechase, hurdle or hunt races. While the Curragh was home to the classics and flat racing, to which the Marquis of Waterford also sent some of his horses, he was an ardent supporter of hunt racing. National hunt racing was the next evolutionary step in the fortunes of horse racing, and the establishment of the Irish National Hunt Steeplechase Committee, in 1869, reflected this. The first secretary of this committee was Robert J. Hunter, who was, at this stage also Keeper of the Match Book at the Turf Club.

Though it was an influential body of men, which was associated with horse racing in Co. Tipperary, the organisation and structure put in place by them, did not cross over to other sports. Neither did the lessons which they had learned about regulation, racing grounds or

[186] Tolson. 'The railway myth,' p. 352.

profit maximisation carry over. Rather, they used their experiences to support the racing circuit and meetings, not only locally but nationally. All of this took place, under the aegis of the Turf Club and the National Hunt Steeplechase Committee. For the labouring and working classes, more than anything else, racing gave them a release from the daily routine of life. While they attended in large numbers, at the various meetings their presence and lack of self control often impacted on race results, due to course incursions. Nevertheless, their presence made the occasion.

Chapter 5: The Advent of Organised Athletics and Rowing

Introduction

In an article entitled 'A word about Irish athletics,' published in *United Ireland* in October 1884, the writer told of a decline in athletic sports in Ireland. He called on 'Irish people to take the management of their games into their own hands, to encourage and promote in every way every form of athletics which is peculiarly Irish, and to remove with one sweep everything foreign and iniquitous in the present system'.[1] The author of this article was widely believed to be Michael Cusack, a native of Co. Clare, who was resident in Dublin since 1874. By 1884 he was repulsed by the route which organised athletics had taken in the capital city of Ireland.[2] Cusack objected to the fact that all athletic meetings were held 'under the rules of the Amateur Athletic Association of England, and that any person competing at any meeting not held under these rules should be ineligible to compete elsewhere'.[3] Since 1882 all athletic meetings in Ireland were held under these rules to the detriment of Irish athletes and athletics, he argued. In reply, Maurice Davin, a native of Carrick-on-Suir and one of the leading weight throwers of the 1870s, noted that while the 'English Handbooks of Athletics' were very good, they did not refer to many of the Irish games.[4] Cusack's claim primarily related to weight throwing and jumping events and their demise at athletic sports meetings.

Though the temporal boundaries of this research are from 1840 to 1880, this chapter opens with a brief overview of Cusack's attack on the administration of athletics in Ireland as he observed them in 1884. To find out if there was any basis for extending his argument to the

[1] *United Ireland*, 11 October 1884.
[2] Marcus de Búrca. *Michael Cusack and the GAA* (Dublin, 1989), pp 95-6.
[3] *United Ireland*, 11 October 1884.
[4] 'Irish athletics' in *United Ireland*, 18 Oct. 1884, p. 2.

rest of Ireland Tipperary is used as a case study. His article in *United Ireland* was part of a movement then gathering pace which would ultimately lead to the foundation of the Gaelic Athletic Association in Thurles in November 1884. When the organisation was established and hurling and Gaelic football became codified 'the GAA had already reached its own rational compromise on amateurism for athletics'.[5]

Was there any basis for his attack on the athletic structure in Ireland prior to the foundation of the GAA? That is a key consideration of this chapter in the overall context of the thesis. Essentially, were the men who took part in rural athletic meetings in Tipperary or rowing activities in Carrick-on-Suir and Clonmel similar to their contemporaries in the rest of Ireland and Great Britain? This chapter assesses the athletic environment of Tipperary in the decade leading up to the foundation of the GAA and the degree to which a body of sportsmen, that is local athletes, were specifically targeted by this new sporting organisation. Both Cusack and Maurice Davin were of a farming background. They were representative of the type of athlete who competed at meetings around the country. This chapter demonstrates that in Tipperary there were two parallel sporting identities emerging in the 1870s, that of the amateur and that of the quasi-amateur. The term quasi-amateur is used here to denote athletes who participated in local athletic and rowing events in the county. While they derived income from their winnings, they were neither amateur in the true sense of the word nor full-time professionals. The relevance of this chapter to the thesis is that the evidence suggests there was a pay for play aspect associated with athletics in Tipperary. Journeymen athletes travelled the county competing at athletic meetings. They earned from their winnings an income which ensured a high standard of living, not at all comparable to that to which farm labourers were

[5] Dónal McAnallen. ''The greatest amateur association in the world'? The GAA and amateurism' in Mike Cronin, William Murphy and Paul Rouse (eds) *The Gaelic Athletic Association 1884-2009* (Dublin, 2009), p. 157.

accustomed. They competed in events with a disregard for the athletic principles of amateurism.

The growth of athletics, like other aspects of sport covered in this thesis, owed much of their initial structure and promotion to military officers. The military as an agency of diffusion, a recurring theme in this thesis, is to the fore in this chapter. While appreciating that there was a sporting evolution in place in mid-Victorian Great Britain and Ireland, the subtleties and nuances of this evolution meant different things to different people in the four kingdoms. In this respect, athletics and rowing were no different. As various sports became codified, their embryonic development was as much to do with invention as with tradition and continuity. A case in point here is Gaelic football, a game specifically engineered to be played on the same field as hurling. Gaelic football took elements of various forms of folk football which gave it a unique identity but it was essentially an invented recreational sport. While athletic sports meetings were quite common within Ireland from the 1870s there is a need to explore if there were any patterns discernible in relation to these meetings and the degree to which elements of amateurism were evident or not in their organisation.

Contemporaneous with the development of athletics was rowing, specifically in Clonmel and to a lesser extent in Carrick-on-Suir. Rowing was a sport which had close associations with the spirit of amateurism and this chapter also explores the growth of this recreational activity in south Tipperary where similar strands of amateur and quasi-amateur participation is discussed. Like athletics, rowing also had events for amateurs and for men who competed for prize money. As is shown later, the engagement of professional trainers demonstrates the existence of a mindset which embraced elements of professionalism, especially when it came to competition.

Early Athletics in Ireland and Tipperary

Investigations and analysis of Irish athletics typically revolve around records and the achievements of leading competitors.[6] Some research in relation to the politics of Irish athletics was published in 1990.[7] Other research on the subject gave a simple chronology of Irish championship athletics.[8] Current athletics research relates to a period subsequent to the time frame of this chapter.[9] From a local perspective, research outlining the success of athletes in the national or global arenas gives little evidence in relation to how the athletic structure was organised at a micro level.[10] The Davin family of Carrick-on-Suir, arguably the leading family in Tipperary athletics throughout the 1870s, is the subject of two biographical works, each giving an insight into the local, national and international athletic scene.[11]

In the years preceding the Famine in Ireland one popular recreation for gentleman in south Tipperary was the novel amusement called 'pedestrianism.' Pedestrianism was a form of competitive walking which was often professional. It was funded by both spectators and participants who gambled on the outcome. It was the discipline from which the modern sport of race-walking developed.[12] Some of these events took place over cross country courses, as many of these gentlemen were military officers and local professional men. For example, in Clonmel in 1842 some military personnel from the local barracks took part in a half mile race

[6] P.J. Devlin. *A history of Irish Athletics*. (Dublin, 1924); P.D. Mehigan. *Fifty years of Irish athletics* (1943).
[7] Padraig Griffin. *The politics of Irish athletics, 1850-1990* (Dublin, 1990).
[8] Tony O'Donoghue. *Irish championship athletics 1873-1914* (Dublin, 2005).
[9] Tom Hunt is currently engaged in writing a history of the Irish Olympic movement and its involvement in the various Olympiad. Pearse Reynolds is a current PhD research student at De Montfort University investigating the split in Irish athletics entitled "The split: the N.A.C.A. and political division in Irish athletics and cycling."
[10] Joe Coyle. *Athletics in Drogheda 1861-2001* (Victoria, Canada, 2003), pp 6-12.
[11] Pat Davin. *Recollections of a veteran Irish athlete: the memoirs of Pat Davin, world's all-around athletic champion* (Dublin, 1938); Séamus Ó Riain. *Maurice Davin (1842-1927): first president of the GAA* (Dublin, 1994).
[12] For an insight into the development of pedestrianism in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries see Walter Thom. *Pedestrianism; or an account of the performances of celebrated pedestrians during the last and present century* (Aberdeen, 1813).

'across the country, embracing eight leaps'.[13] Typical of such events, 'some heavy bets' were laid on the outcome of the race.[14] For pedestrianism, in spite of its manly nature, was as likely to be associated with gambling as it was with sport for its own sake.[15]

In his account of pedestrianism, Walter Thom argued that it was by 'exercise that the soldier is gradually inured to the hardships of the field'.[16] What the military officers brought to south Tipperary was a knowledge and experience of pedestrianism which was widespread in England and also Scotland at that time but not as well known in rural southern Ireland.[17] One writer noted that in the early nineteenth century England, sprinting and pedestrianism 'enjoyed aristocratic patronage'.[18] It is argued here that one of the principal reasons why such events occurred at this time was due to the English origin of the officers and their familiarity with the sport prior to their posting in Ireland. These men had a lot of time on their hands to take part in such activities and lay wagers on the outcome. It was an accident of military posting rather than design. It also gave some local gentlemen an opportunity to test their own abilities against the officers. Unlike England, pedestrianism did not feature highly in Tipperary except for a few minor races. Essentially, pedestrianism in Tipperary was a frivolity.

This section has looked briefly at the role of the gentleman amateur and his participation at pedestrian events in south Tipperary. The word 'gentleman' is the key term when assessing

[13] *Tipperary Free Press*, 8 June 1842. The men were drawn from the Royal Artillery, 5th Dragoons, and 46th Depot, all garrisoned in Clonmel.
[14] As pedestrianism became popular in the United Kingdom, large sums of money were wagered on the ability of a pedestrian to complete a specific task in the required time. As Thom has shown there were several men who would bet on themselves to complete the task once there was another gambler willing to bet against him. Thom, *Pedestrianism*, pp 47-48, 51-54.
[15] *Tipperary Free Press*, 19 Oct. 1850.
[16] Thom, *Pedestrianism*, pp 33-5.
[17] Neil L. Tranter. 'The chronology of organised sport in nineteenth-century Scotland: a regional study. I – patterns' in *The International Journal of the History of Sport* Vol. 7, No. 2 (1990), p. 191.
[18] Jim Sharlott. *On the starting line: a history of athletics in Leicester*. (Leicester, 1994), p. 12.

pedestrianism. In the same way as cricket had gentlemen and non-gentlemen players, so too did pedestrianism. But it was a short lived activity, one devoid of great interest to the wider Tipperary community. While the spectacle provided by men competing at such events was novel, it did not carry the same lasting appeal as the athletic meetings which were to follow in its wake.

The Advent of Athletic Sports Meetings

Having looked briefly at the evidence for pedestrianism, this next section investigates the emergence in Tipperary of athletic sports meetings. As these meetings became popular in the county from the 1860s it was no surprise to find the military leading their promotion. Yet the presence of the military contradicts Cusack's belief that when the 'so-called revival of athletics was inaugurated in Ireland ... labourers, tradesmen, artists, and even policemen and soldiers were excluded from the few competitions which constituted the lame and halting programme of the promoters.'[19] The 1850s was a watershed period for the athletic movement in Tipperary as athletic meetings came to replace pedestrianism. What followed in its wake were athletic sports meetings.

The term 'athletics' is used as an all-embracing term for the purposes of this chapter which includes foot racing, racing against time, hurdling, leaping events, and weight throwing events. The 'first recorded athletic meeting' in Ireland was held at Trinity College, Dublin on 28 February 1857.[20] An athletics meeting was held in Drogheda in 1861.[21] The earliest reference to an athletic meeting in Co. Tipperary that I found, with fifteen events up for decision, was organised by the non-commissioned officers of the 4th Hussars at Cahir

[19] *United Ireland*, 11 Oct. 1884.
[20] Colm Farry. 'Popular sport in Ireland: the codification process, 1750-1885'. Unpublished MA thesis, Dublin City University, 2001, pp 43-4. Coyle, *Athletics in Drogheda*, p. 7.
[21] Coyle, *Athletics in Drogheda*, pp 8-10.

barracks. This also took place in 1861. No breakdown of the event types was quoted in the press though reference was made to 'the spirit of the mounted [horse races] and foot racing'.[22] Military athletic sports had previously taken place in the Curragh.[23] The Cahir sports, ostensibly arranged to commemorate the 'memorable charge at Balaklava,' had events which were solely competed for by men who fought in this famous battle. The holding of such a sports meeting was also contemporaneous with similar happenings in England.[24]

What is clear from the various reports, which are recorded in the local press, is that the military were the primary instigators of early athletic sports meetings in Tipperary. The military were a key factor in the direct cultural transmission of athletic sports meetings. While the officers and soldiers had military tasks and duties to perform, their duties within the walls of the barracks also afforded them time for recreation.[25] In Templemore, the military were a key component in the growth of athletics in the town. Apart from supplying the parade field for athletics, there were also military and civilian races which attracted great interest. From 1869 military regiments, such as the 44th and 68th Light Infantry, held annual athletic events in the parade field was adjacent to the garrison.[26] An athletic club was then formed in the town. Mr. Casey, a town commissioner and the club secretary, instituted an athletic sports meeting to take place in August 1871. While no records have been found for this club, it is likely that it was established on foot of the athletic interest generated in the town by the military. The exploits of the soldiers, it is argued here, likely led to emulation locally and a town club was then established.

[22] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 23 Oct., 26 Oct. 1861.
[23] *Nenagh Guardian*, 7 July 1857.
[24] Sharlott, *Athletics in Leicester*, pp 13-4.
[25] Mason and Reidi. *Sport and the Military*, p. 7.
[26] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 23 June 1869; 2 Sept. 1871.

There were no athletic sports meetings indentified in Co. Tipperary organised by civilians prior to the military meetings. This is an important element in the popularisation of these sports in this part of rural Ireland. Anything that followed owed everything to the example shown by the military. Yet again the military were the agents for innovation and growth in athletics, as they were for other sports outlined in this thesis. In 1868, a largely civilian sports event took place at Fethard in a 'large field adjoining the barracks' and it was observed that 'such gatherings are fraught with many advantages: they tend to bind classes in kindliness of feeling, to develop manly vigour, and to create a wholesome rivalry for the attainment of an object, which benefits the competitors both mentally and physically.'[27] Events on the day included races such as the mile, 100 yards, 440 yards hurdle, running high jump, boy's races and the ever popular 'throwing the cricket ball'. Infrequent school athletic meetings, usually no more than end of school year outings, suggest that there was no developmental role undertaken by the county schools, such as Rockwell College or Tipperary Grammar School, to promote athletics. While it was argued that schools in Dublin played a role in promoting athletics, this thesis does not stand for Tipperary.[28] It is very likely that public schools, if not exactly disapproving of athletics, viewed such sports with suspicion because they promoted the cult of the individual and did nothing to enhance 'team spirit.'

Unlike other sports in which they were prominent, such as horse racing, hunting to hounds, cricket and archery, landlords and businessmen did not actively organise athletics during this period. There are instances, as at Cahir in 1870, where three of the landed elite had their names included in a list of ten patrons for the military sports, but there was no evidence that they were actively engaged in establishing athletic sports meetings.[29] The soldiers who

[27] *Tipperary Free Press*, 9 June 1868.
[28] Finn. 'Trinity mysteries,' p. 2274.
[29] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 28 Sept. 1870.

competed at the latter end of the 1860s and at the start of the 1870s were not unlike those who took part in pedestrianism a generation earlier. The primary change was that gentlemen amateurs, the officers, were now replaced by competitors drawn from the lower ranks. Though the men drawn from the lower ranks were to the fore in the athletic events, it was the officer class which granted permission for the sports to take place. It was the officers who led the committee which brought the athletic sports meeting to a successful conclusion.[30]

At the 'military and constabulary athletic games' in Nenagh it was commented that few would not 'ascert (*sic*) that the innocent recreation ... had any other than a sympathetic ennobling and exhilarating tendency both upon the crowd of spectators and the vigorous fellows who entered the lists.'[31] While the sports were the reason for the gathering in the town of 'nearly all the respectable shopkeepers of the town, the town commissioners and their families, [and] a large contribution from the country around', the report commenced by highlighting the importance of the military to the community. It remarked that there was probably not a town in Ireland 'that would not also aspire to the *undefined status* (*sic*) imparted to every place where troops are quartered from January to December.' This was a key element in the relationship of the military with the garrison town. The correspondent was well aware, as were the shopkeepers and town commissioners, of the economic advantages a military barracks brought to the town. This was not something that occurred occasionally. The military were present all year round. One cannot discount either that a commanding officer understood the economic importance of the barracks to the community. This was not specific to Tipperary. It was as relevant to a barracks in England or any other part of the Empire. For many in the military, especially the officers, they lived comfortably in the

[30] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 3 July 1872.
[31] *Nenagh Guardian*, 2 May 1868.

locality to which they were posted and were an important, if not central, part of any area's social life.[32]

This section has looked at the development of athletic sports meetings in Tipperary.[33] Instrumental in this development were the military personnel countywide. Athletic events which took place within the barrack walls came to the attention of the civilian community. Relations between the two communities were, in the main, amicable and friendly. Athletics meetings included events for both military and civilian competitors, as well as communal events which led to a gradual growth of such meetings countywide. This communal bond demonstrated that relationships were good between the military and the various local communities, as discussed in Chapter One. Where the military led, the civilian population followed. This is what happened with the development of athletics.

The Athletics Sports Meeting

This section looks at the growth of the athletic sports phenomenon of the 1870s. It maps the spread of meetings and provides an insight into why the sport became popular. From 1872 to 1880 the spread of athletic sports meetings in the county radiated from the south Tipperary hinterland of Carrick-on-Suir, home to the Davin family, to the rest of the county. (See Figure 20 and Table 12).[34] Also making an appearance as a new agency of diffusion was the Catholic Young Men's Society (CYMS), Roscrea, which held a series of athletic sports in the summer of 1873.[35] It was one of the rare occasions when sports were organised on a

[32] Tom Hunt has shown how sporting recreation offered military personnel 'a seamless introduction and a means of integration into local elite society'. Hunt, *Sport and society*, p.15.
[33] Military and constabulary athletic games, *Nenagh Guardian*, 2 May 1868; Fethard athletic games, *Tipperary Free Press*, 9 June 1868; Athletic sports in Tipperary, *Clonmel Chronicle*, 30 June 1869; Athletic sports in Cahir, *Tipperary Free Press*, 16 July 1879.
[34] See Davin, *Recollections of a veteran Irish athlete* and Ó Riain, *Maurice Davin* for further insights into their careers.
[35] *Tipperary Advocate*, 12 July 1873; 26 July 1873; 9 Aug. 1873. *Nenagh Guardian*, 13 Aug. 1873.

confessional basis in Tipperary. The CYMS was established in Roscrea, around 1863 or 1864.[36] A Young Men's Christian Association was previously established in the town, sometime around 1859.[37] The CYMS were also active on the cricket field from 1873 to 1877.[38] There was also a CYMS cricket team in Kilkenny.[39]

But unlike in England, and in particular Birmingham, while these cricket and athletic sports originated from a church organisation they were unable to keep their activities going. In Birmingham, Aston Villa Football Club became an integral part of the life of many in the church organisation from which it drew its origins.[40] However, the origin of clubs in Roscrea and Birmingham are similar in one respect. The 'sporting initiative' came from the ordinary members of clubs rather than from any direct involvement with the clergy.[41] During the time frame of this thesis, the clergy, especially the Roman Catholic clergy, were noticeable by their absence from sporting matters throughout the county. In the context of the period, when the Catholic Church under Cardinal Cullen became increasingly Romanised and control over the flock was increasingly coordinated, this lack of interest in the recreation of parishioners is noteworthy. It was not until the GAA was founded that the Catholic clergy took an active interest in matters of Irish sport.

[36] Bassett. *Tipperary: a guide and directory 1889*, p. 319.
[37] Bassett. *Tipperary: a guide and directory 1889*, p. 319.
[38] *Nenagh Guardian*, 13 Aug. 1873; 23 Aug. 1873; 24 Sept. 1873; 24 June 1874; 28 Aug. 1875; 15 Sept. 1875. *Tipperary Advocate*, 18 July 1874. John Lawrence. *Handbook of cricket in Ireland 1871-72*. Vol. 7. (Dublin, 1872), p. 208. John Lawrence. *Handbook of cricket in Ireland 1872-73*. Vol. 8. (Dublin, 1873), pp 181-82. John Lawrence. *Handbook of cricket in Ireland 1873-74*. Vol. 9. (Dublin, 1874), p. 154. John Lawrence. *Handbook of cricket in Ireland 1875-76*. Vol. 11. (Dublin, 1876), p. 167. John Lawrence. *Handbook of cricket in Ireland 1876-77*. Vol. 12. (Dublin, 1873), p. 120. John Lawrence. *Handbook of cricket in Ireland 1877-78*. Vol. 13. (Dublin, 1878), p. 129.
[39] *Kilkenny Journal*, 29 Sept. 1879.
[40] Holt. *Sport and the British*, p. 138.
[41] Holt. *Sport and the British*, p. 138.

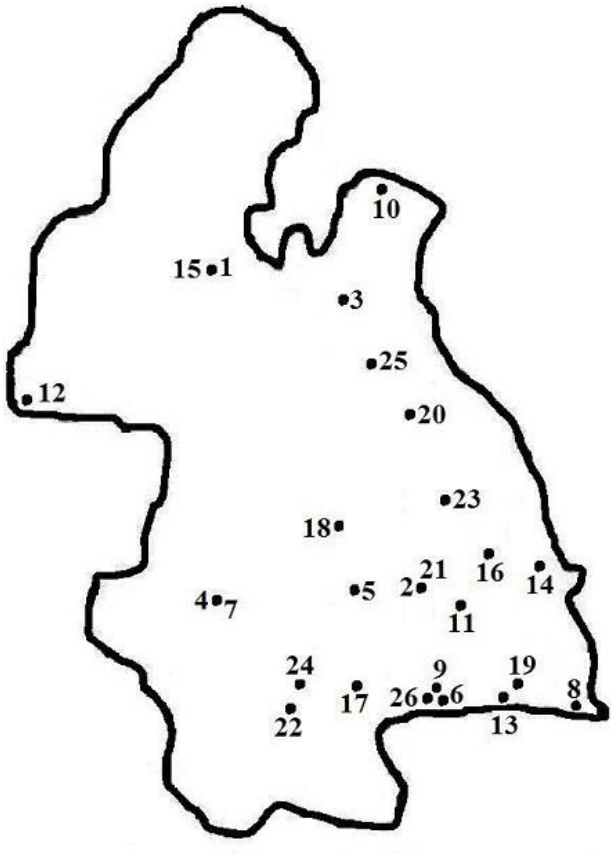

Figure 20: Locations of athletic meetings, 1868-80. Key relates to map numbers in Table 12.

While Fethard held a sports meeting in 1868, the geography of athletic meetings suggests that it spread, year on year, around the central hub of Carrick-on-Suir and Clonmel. It was as if desire to emulate the Davins' success resulted in the athletics phenomenon spreading steadily outward from their south Tipperary base. Killusty, Mullinahone, Kilsheelan, Cahir, Drangan, Graigue and Littleton were rural towns and villages which, by 1876, had held an athletic meeting. These towns and villages were near to each other. This made for easier travel between home and the sports, mindful that several of these areas had no rail connection. Similar meetings in the north and west of the county may not have been reported in the local press. The absence of any reported events there is reflected in blank areas in Figure 20.

Table 12: Location of athletic sports meeting by inception date, 1868-1880.

Map Number	Location	Year	Map Number	Location	Year
1	Nenagh Garrison	1868	14	Mullinahone	1873
2	Fethard Garrison	1868	15	Nenagh	1875
3	Templemore Garrison	1869	16	Drangan	1875
4	Tipperary Garrison	1869	17	Clogheen	1876
5	Cahir	1869	18	Rockwell College	1876
6	Clonmel Garrison	1870	19	Graigue	1876
7	Tipperary Grammar School	1870	20	Littleton	1876
8	Carrick-on-Suir	1872	21	Fethard	1876
9	Clonmel	1872	22	Burntcourt	1877
10	Roscrea CYMS	1873	23	Noan	1877
11	Killusty	1873	24	Rehill	1877
12	St. John's College, Newport	1873	25	Thurles	1878
13	Kilsheelan	1873	26	Clonmel Endowed School	1880

These sports had the potential to attract large numbers of spectators. At the sports in Carrick-on-Suir, in 1872, there were about 3,000 people present. It was stated that 5,000 people were present at an athletic sports meeting in Mullinahone in 1873.[42] In Killusty, also in 1873, 'the muster of people on the ground could not have been far short of ten or twelve thousand persons.'[43] After two years the Littleton sports lapsed. The meeting was replaced by the nearby Thurles sports, which was five miles away. An improbable '20,000 spectators' was

[42] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 3 April 1872, 24 Sept. 1873.
[43] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 20 Aug. 1873.

estimated to have attended at these sports in 1878, their first year.[44] Not only were athletics meetings attracting regular competitors, they also attracted an interested public. The involvement of a local athlete brought with it reflected glory on his community. This adulation was a likely contributory factor in the development of athletic sports meetings in other towns and villages around Tipperary.

Apart from the Davin brothers, William Foley,(Carrick-on-Suir),[45] Michael Tobin (Drangan),[46] Richard St. John (Mullinahone),[47] Walter Duggan (Powerstown),[48] and T.K. Dwyer (Littleton)[49] featured regularly in athletics meetings during the period 1872-1876. Not alone did this happen at a meeting in their own town or village but at other events around Tipperary and Ireland. The nucleus of athletes who competed and won from south-east Tipperary soon spread to the middle of the county. This suggests a structured nature to the events. The entrance fee to each event was usually one shilling.

The general evidence suggests that the majority of athletics sports meetings were organised by committees formed for that specific purpose. (See Table 12 for the inception date of meetings in Tipperary). Most meetings had a programme of sports which typically numbered fourteen events. Based on the evidence of press reports, first place in an event carried a prize of £1 with ten shillings awarded to the second placed competitor. The irony of this was that most events rarely contained enough competitors, paying one shilling entry fee to match the prize money for the event. But not only that, it was not unusual for an athlete to enter and then not compete in an event. At the Littleton sports in September 1877, seventeen entries

[44] *Tipperary Advocate*, 20 July 1878.
[45] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 3 Apr. 1872, 7 Aug. 1872.
[46] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 20 Aug. 1873; *Tipperary Free Press*, 26 Sept. 1873, 24 Sept. 1875.
[47] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 28 June 1873; 20 Aug. 1873; 24 Sept. 1873.
[48] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 28 June 1873, 20 Aug. 1873;
[49] *Tipperary Free Press*, 24 Sept. 1875, 3 Oct. 1876.

were received for the 220 yards race but only ten competitors ran. It seems likely that some withdrew when they saw the opposition, while others were entered and had their names published to boost interest in the event. Similarly, for the half mile race, eighteen entries were received but only ten ran.[50]

This was not something which was specific to Tipperary.[51] Therefore the organisers had to find some other way to meet the cost of the events and one way around this was to erect a stand- house. While this incurred another cost, it was probable that the revenues of the day were balanced by the money generated from entry to the confined area. At the Powerstown sports in 1873 entry to the stand was two shillings. A press report noted that 'it was crowded throughout the day' and apart from the stand there were 'thousands on the course.'[52] Such was the festival nature of the meeting that many businesses and shops closed at 1.00pm to allow employees to attend.

There are rare references in the press which indicated that there was an entry fee to a venue. In 1876, at the Nenagh Cricket Club sports, admission to the reserved entrance cost one shilling, and sixpence to the field. This is an example of fund raising by that club.[53] The programme of sports in 1879 noted that the entrance was sixpence to the sports and, for the grandstand, the fee was one shilling.[54] At a time when general admission fees were not levied at athletic meetings, let alone at horse race meetings, it suggests that the entrance charge was a means of regulating those who actually entered the grounds. It was something which the Nenagh CC had put in place since the inception of its sports. Many people would not have

[50] Littleton athletic sports programme of events, September 1877. *Clonmel Chronicle*, 15 Sept. 1877; *Nenagh Guardian*, 15 Sept. 1877.
[51] O'Donoghue. *Irish championship athletics*, p. 7.
[52] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 28 June 1873.
[53] *Tipperary Advocate*, 10 June 1876.
[54] *Tipperary Advocate*, 31 May 1879.

been in a position to afford the sixpence admission fee so this worked as a filtering process, enforcing social exclusion without actually stating it was so.

Nenagh Cricket Club, from 1875, organised an annual series of athletic sports, which proved successful. These were widely supported by the inhabitants of the town with 'at least two thousand spectators' present.[55] That a cricket club embarked on such a programme of events, given that it was active on the cricket field, suggests an organisational structure which was both committed and focused on embracing a wide variety of sporting activities and occasions. Over the next few years the club continued with its athletic sports programme. However, in spite of the self congratulatory expressions conveyed in the press, the fact remained that the number of competitors was small. Though good prize money was on offer, the two shillings entry fee for some events was a deterrent to many people. Others attempted to force free admission to the sports by pushing on the gates.[56] Be that as it may, the sports brought valued custom to the town with 'cash receipts … possibly doubled' in the shops on account of the increased number of people coming into Nenagh.[57] So successful were the sports that, in 1880, a second series of events was organised for October.[58]

The accounts of the Carrick-on-Suir Amateur Athletic, Cricket and Football club up to its first general meeting in March 1880 give some indication that the introduction of entrance fees was common. Accounts for the club sports in November 1879 show that entrance fees amounted to £1 8*s.* but that 'money received at gate and cards of evening' came to £21.[59]

[55] *Tipperary Advocate*, 17 July 1875.
[56] *Tipperary Advocate*, 10 June 1876; *Nenagh Guardian*, 17 June 1876.
[57] *Tipperary Advocate*, 17 June 1876.
[58] *Tipperary Advocate*, 9 Oct. 1880; 16 Oct. 1880.
[59] 'Minute book – Carrick-on-Suir athletic, cricket and football club. Established August 1879'

This amount greatly assisted in covering the expenses incurred and, as such, one may infer that at some other meetings admission fees were charged to the general public.

There are some striking parallels between steeple-chase racing and athletics meetings in terms of structure and organisation. Aspects of this cross fertilisation were - the list of patrons, reserved stand-house and enclosure, prize money events, and local organisation. A field was requisitioned by a local committee to hold an event which took place in an afternoon, to which, for the most part, general admission was free. Those wishing to aspire to better facilities had to pay for the luxury of such goods or amenities.

Other agencies and individuals also sought ways of making money from the athletics phenomenon sweeping through south Tipperary. The committee which organised the Kilsheelan athletic sports, in September 1873, rented a field for the day only to discover 'almost at the last moment … [that] their rule was transgressed by the owner of the land in permitting a publican to erect a tent in the field adjoining.'[60] At this juncture the selling of alcohol was prohibited at such meetings. Unlike horse racing, where beer tents were a common feature of the paraphernalia of the day, athletics were a different proposition. The organising committee of the Powerstown sports in 1873 were lauded in that they '*absolutely prohibited* the sale of intoxicating drinks on the grounds'.[61] The fact that any money accruing from such a tent was more likely to go back to the farmer rather than the committee was another point at issue. Consequently, all equipment associated with the sports was subsequently removed to another site with 'the carpenter from Gurteen … in very active requisition, for a stand-house was erected at a point commanding a full view of the enclosure.' In late 1874, a comment in the press advised that perhaps the Waterford and

[60] *Tipperary Free Press*, 23 Sept. 1873.
[61] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 18 June 1873. Italics as in the original text.

Limerick Rail Company might see fit to run a 'special' from Clonmel to Cahir for the forthcoming sports, on St. Stephen's Day,[62] suggesting that it 'would be a paying speculation.'[63] This they did, carrying passengers to the town with return fares charged at a single fare rate. This greatly contributed to the attendance. It also gave this railway company another sporting connection. As mentioned previously, the Waterford and Limerick Railway Company regularly ran sporting specials to towns on its route.

Overall, from 1868 to 1880, there were seventy-six separate athletic sports meetings. These included civilian, military and school sports. When compared with central Scotland the results are impressive. For the decade 1871 to 1880 there were sixty-eight separate meetings in Tipperary while for central Scotland the figure stands at just six.[64] (see Figure 21) The population of Tipperary in 1871 was 216,713, while for central Scotland it was 2,047,000.[65]

[62] St. Stephen's Day is the common Irish definition of 26 December, its English counterpart being Boxing Day.
[63] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 16 Dec. 1874.
[64] Tranter. 'Scotland: a regional study. I – patterns' in *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, p. 189.
[65] *Census of Ireland 1871*. James Gray (ed.) *Scottish population statistics including Webster's analysis of population 1755* (Edinburgh, 1952), p. xxix.

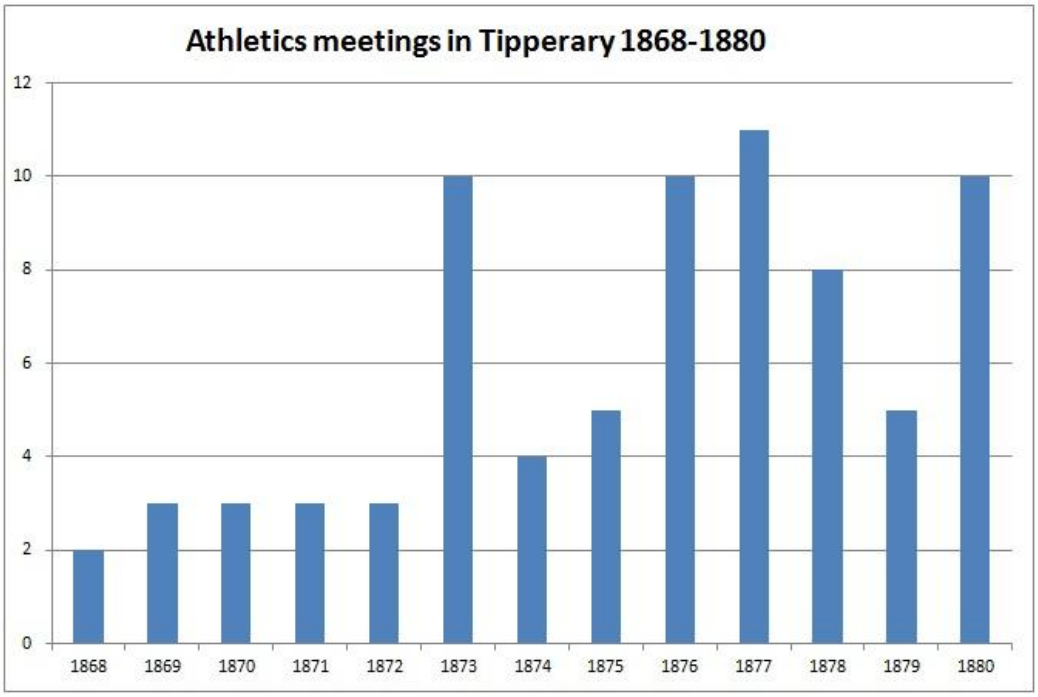

Figure 21: Athletics sports meetings in Co. Tipperary, 1868-1880. (Total = 76)

This section has looked at the growth of athletic sports meetings in Tipperary from the latter end of the 1860s up to the end of 1880. When locations are mapped and dates of meetings are analysed, the evidence shows that there was an expansion of such meetings on the back of similar ones at the various military garrisons countywide. The geographic spread was centred on the south east of the county emanating from Carrick-on-Suir. Ó Riain has noted that these meetings were a 'spontaneous response to the demand for community recreation that was influenced by the track and field achievements of the Davin brothers.'[66] Local committees were quick to recognise the financial benefits which accrued from the holding of athletics meetings and hence these meetings sprang up in towns as easily as they did in the remotest rural villages. That there was an element of commercialisation with some of these meetings is without doubt. If some of the athletes were competing on a semi-professional basis, so too

[66] Ó Riain, *Maurice Davin*, p. 31.

were the committees. Their remit was one of business, as opposed to patronage, and this marked a change in emphasis in the sporting culture of Tipperary in the 1870s.

The Emergence of Rowing in South Tipperary

Contemporaneous with the emergence of athletic sports in Tipperary was the sport of rowing on the River Suir at Clonmel and Carrick-on-Suir, at the southern end of the county. Rowing is another sport which was closely linked to amateurism and this section looks at the emergence of the sport in south Tipperary.

By the time the River Suir reached Clonmel and then on to Carrick-on-Suir, its volume had significantly increased as it flowed south through the county. Clonmel town is sited on the northern bank of the river and the morphology of the town developed parallel to it, in an east-west direction. Carrick-on-Suir developed in a similar fashion, with the principal area of the town also on the northern bank of the river.

The management of a rowing regatta was similar to that of horse racing. Local committees were to the fore in the promotion of regattas with many races held over a series of heats. A committee was appointed by the 'local gentry' for the purpose of organising aquatic sports at Clonmel in June 1861.[67] The emergence of 'several prominent professional rowing families' in Carrick-on-Suir mirrored that which occurred among the rowing community on the Thames in England.[68] In Carrick-on-Suir, families specifically associated with rowing became prominent in boat building and racing Notable among them were the Davin brothers. For successful regattas, the committee needed financial support and into the breach, once

[67] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 26 June 1861.
[68] Eric Halladay. *Rowing in England: a social history. The amateur debate* (Manchester & New York, 1990), p. 15.

more, came the landed and business classes from in and around the towns of Carrick-on-Suir and Clonmel. It is clear from the press reports that some of the principal residents of the town were active in the promotion of the sports. Clonmel landlord, John Bagwell, regularly forwarded 'a handsome subscription' to the treasurer appointed by the committee.[69]

Regattas were held in both towns in 1871.[70] Though both were apparently successful, the regatta at Carrick-on-Suir was short lived. It came to an end in 1872. An athletic sports meeting replaced the regatta.[71] There is no evidence to suggest that there was disharmony among the rowing community of Carrick-on-Suir leading to the demise of the annual regatta. Rather, one of the primary reasons appeared to have been the switching of the Davin brothers from rowing to athletics. It has been shown with other sports that when some of the key personnel involved in the organisation of a club departed the whole structure collapsed.[72] The same applied to the Carrick-on-Suir regatta. Maurice Davin specifically built boats for regattas and his departure from the sport was undoubtedly a key factor in its demise.[73] This is not to say that the Davin family stopped rowing completely but the support which they had given to the Carrick regatta was central to its survival. Another man who competed with the Davins in rowing competition, William Foley, also changed to athletics.[74] During their brief existence in Carrick-on-Suir, the regatta committee received support from leading land owners such as the Marquis of Waterford and Henry W. Briscoe, Tinvane, who was also Master of the Kilkenny Foxhounds.[75]

[69] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 10 July 1871; 12 Aug. 1874; 11 Aug. 1875. *Tipperary Free Press*, 12 Sept. 1876.
[70] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 23 Aug. 1871; 30 Aug. 1871.
[71] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 10 April 1872.
[72] Curran. 'Why Donegal slept,' p. 151. Seumas MacManus moved to the United States and by 1907 the GAA structure in Donegal started to collapse once he had departed as an administrator.
[73] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 23 Aug. 1865; 27 Apr. 1870.
[74] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 23 Aug. 1865; 1 Aug. 1866; 3 Apr. 1872; 7 Aug. 1872.
[75] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 30 July 1870; 30 Aug. 1871.

The Carrick-on-Suir regatta of 1871 attracted an attendance which 'could not have been less than some twenty thousand spectators gathered on the banks of the river'.[76] Though many could never hope to compete, the opportunity to attend as spectators was something which people were not going to miss. It did not matter whether it was on the Suir in Tipperary or the Thames in London, ordinary people came out in force to witness the sport.[77] What they also came out to witness was the spectacle associated with the regatta. At Clonmel in 1871, three bands played which 'greatly enlivened' the regatta experience and such were the feelings of good will generated on the occasion, it was envisaged that the regatta 'be maintained as an annual event'.[78] That this was going to happen soon became evident. A meeting was called, for the 'project of establishing a Rowing Club for Clonmel'.[79] At this meeting the reasons for establishing a rowing club were outlined. Almost immediately the new club set about developing plans to procure ground on which to build a boathouse.[80]

Those prominent in the town - the town mayor, town commissioners, solicitors, bankers, newspaper proprietors, and land owners - were quickly associated with the club. Reports of club meetings, carrying their names, were widely published. The club president was Thomas Cambridge Grubb, a member of a long established Quaker family. He was a corn merchant and had two mills operating at Richmond Place and Manor Mills.[81] As a river freight operator, he also had business interests on the River Suir.[82] Winchester's Hotel, in Clonmel, was a location for club meetings when these were held away from the boat house.[83] John Winchester, civil engineer, drew up plans for the new boathouse. Another club member,

[76] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 30 Aug. 1871.
[77] Halladay. *Rowing in England*, p. 17.
[78] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 23 Aug. 1871.
[79] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 9 Sept 1871.
[80] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 13 Sept. 1871.
[81] *Slater's directory of Ireland 1870* (Manchester and London, 1870), p. 36.
[82] Bassett. *Tipperary: a guide and directory 1889*, p. 103.
[83] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 13 June 1877; 19 Jan. 1878.

Thomas Horrigan, was appointed the contractor for the works.[84] That the boathouse was erected 'without any demand whatever upon public liberality' was deemed proof of what could be achieved 'by united and friendly co-operation.'[85]

Regattas organised by the Clonmel Rowing Club continued to be a feature of the sporting recreation in the town for the remainder of the 1870s. Such was the desire of the committee for the regattas to be successful that four specific areas of the town were apportioned to sub-committees. These sub-committees canvassed residents and businesses for subscriptions to support the regatta. This was a new departure for any sporting activity. A club now sought funds from the general public to support its activities. Heretofore hunt committees or race committees sought enhanced subscriptions from members but not from the general public. The success of the regatta in 1871 was said to be due to 'hearty support from the general public – a support which ... will also place so creditable an institution as the Clonmel rowing club in a prosperous financial condition'.[86]

By early August 1872, £49 17*s* 6*d* had been collected, ensuring that funds were adequate to meet the costs of prizes on offer.[87] That the regatta was a commercial enterprise was further evidenced by the willingness, yet again, of the Waterford and Limerick Rail Company to run a 'special' train to Clonmel; it 'wisely determined to combine business with pleasure'.[88] The regatta took place on a Monday with all businesses in town closed. It was noted that 'even the most staid of business men' felt compelled to observe the day as a general holiday and close

[84] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 23 Mar. 1872.
[85] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 18 May 1872.
[86] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 13 July 1872.
[87] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 27 July 1872; 10 Aug. 1872.
[88] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 24 Aug. 1872; 28 Aug. 1872.

their businesses at one o'clock as people made their way to the banks of the Suir.[89] For the regatta of 1875 the woollen and linen drapers issued a notice in the local press advising that their warehouses would close on the day of the meeting.[90] For rural shopkeepers to lose a day's business willingly was extraordinary.[91] Marquees and tents provided music, song and dance which enhanced the festival atmosphere in the town. One magistrate permitted the issuing of occasional licences for beer tents in the vicinity of the regatta, much to the dissatisfaction of the organising committee.[92] With the regatta attracting thousands to the town the commercial opportunities were exploited by many traders, some casual, but not by the shopkeepers, who had to close.

Though some of the races on the regatta programme were advertised as amateur events the regatta itself was anything but amateur. In this respect it reflected the pattern of professional matches 'on the River Tyne where they signalled a general holiday with thousands attending'.[93] The advent of the regatta gave some retail businessmen an opportunity to increase the range of products which they could offer to a discerning clientele. Andrew Milne offered 'blue serge boating suits' made to order, for thirty-five shillings. D.H. Higgins, the proprietor of a prominent sporting goods establishment, had among his range of stock 'two beautifully finished canoes, by a first class Dublin builder'.[94] This good business was also underpinned by ongoing subscriptions, some of which were used to pay off the debt on the club grounds.[95] A caretaker was employed to maintain the club house and grounds.[96]

[89] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 28 Aug. 1872.
[90] *Tipperary Free Press*, 17 Aug. 1875.
[91] Later in the century when shop assistants unions sought to introduce a half day holiday employers resisted vigorously.
[92] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 9 Aug. 1879.
[93] Neil Wigglesworth. *The social history of English rowing* (London and New York, 1992), p. 3.
[94] *Tipperary Free Press*, 13 Aug. 1875; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 12 June 1878.
[95] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 12 Aug. 1874; 11 Aug. 1875. *Tipperary Free Press*, 14 May 1875; 13 Aug. 1875; 12 Sept. 1876.
[96] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 27 Apr. 1872; 11 May 1872.

The club committee took a bold step forward in 1875 when they engaged the services of a trainer, Tom Hoare, 'under whose tuition the crews attained considerable proficiency' (see Figure 22).[97] Hoare was an experienced oarsman, having spent much of his early career rowing on the River Thames where he was the National Champion in 1861.[98] From Hammersmith, London, Hoare trained the crews each evening. A communication to the local press noted that the club was to be 'congratulated on securing the services of a first-class trainer'.[99] Hoare also used some of the contacts which he had among the rowing community in England to obtain a first class four-oared out-rigger for the club from Messrs Robinson and Simms, Putney.[100]

The employment of Hoare marked a new approach to the sport by what was a relatively new rowing club. That it had the money to employ him for a brief period from August 1875 to May 1876, demonstrated the positive attitude of the committee about competitive rowing. Hoare's employment paid dividends for the club as a crew under his supervision won the Clonmel Cup at a very competitively fought regatta in August 1875.[101] Hoare, in accepting a gold ring, as a mark of esteem for his 'generally eminent services in connection with the late regatta,' added that 'it would always afford him pleasure to give his time on the selection of their boats and that he hoped in future to be associated with the victories of the Clonmel Rowing Club'.[102]

[97] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 13 May 1876.
[98] Wigglesworth. *English rowing*, p. 81.
[99] *Tipperary Free Press*, 20 July 1875.
[100] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 15 Jan. 1876.
[101] *Tipperary Free Press*, 24 Aug. 1875.
[102] *Tipperary Free Press*, 3 Sept. 1875; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 4 Sept. 1875.

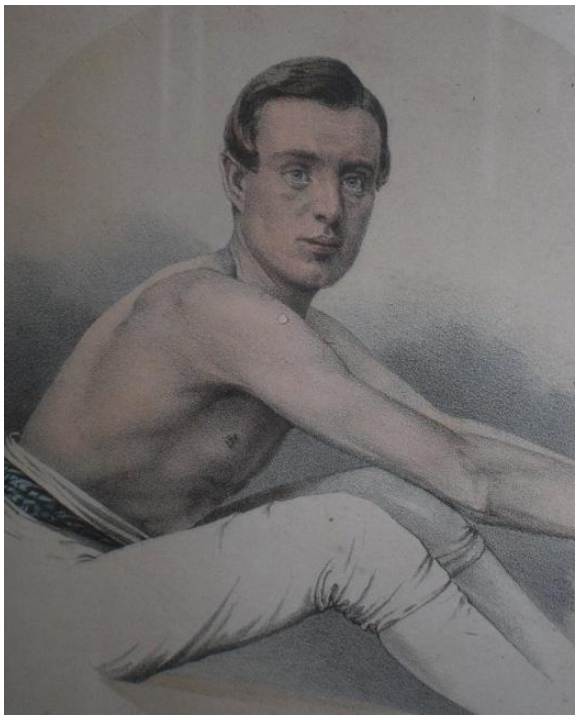

Figure 22: Thomas Hoare (1843-1918) (Source: http://thomashoare.webs.com)

However, by 1876 Hoare had departed to take up a position as club professional with the Pengwern Boat Club in Shrewsbury. By this time a rule against engaging watermen as professionals was rescinded owing to the difficulty of colleges finding suitable amateur coaches.[103] A further drawback to the success of the Clonmel Rowing Club was that there was unwillingness amongst active members to turn up for training or participate in rowing competitions. The club captain, Gerald Fitzgerald, felt that while 'the club consisted of one hundred members and upwards, he could not say that there was really one crew fit to compete in an open race with another club'.[104]

After the departure of Hoare matters did not improve. Another trainer, Mr James, was brought in and 'at considerable expense' and was employed for some weeks during the

[103] Wigglesworth. *English rowing*, p. 81.
[104] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 28 June 1876.

season of 1876, only to find that 'more of the members did not avail of his services'.[105] James' tenure was not a lengthy one. Yet another trainer was brought in by the club. Matt Taylor provided his services achieving some success in 1879. Prior to his appointment with Clonmel, Taylor was trainer to the Dublin University Boat Club.[106] Taylor was a native of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and, when engaged by the University club in the late 1860s, he was earning £3 per week during the rowing season.[107] He was also a noted boat-builder. In an Oxford v. Cambridge boat race, in 1872, the Oxford crew practiced in their new 'Matt Taylor' boat.[108] At Clonmel, he successfully oversaw the local club as they won both the junior and senior wherry races during the local regatta.[109] He was still engaged with them as a trainer in 1880.[110] Taylor worked out of Ringsend in Dublin and had initially been contracted by Clonmel to supply them with 'two tub-pair oared boats'.[111] He supplied boats to many clubs. Some clubs also advertising boats made by him for sale in the national press.[112] His time coaching the Clonmel crew, added to his income, if, as one may infer, he was paid £3 per week when on duty with the club. This outsourcing of a professional trainer impacted on a club's finances, hence the need for Clonmel to canvass for funds. In 1865 and 1866 the Dublin University club allocated £20 each season for the hiring of a trainer. It is likely that a similar sum of money was required by the Clonmel club to engage the services of Hoare, James or Taylor.[113]

[105] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 13 June 1877.
[106] *Irish Times*, 11 Aug. 1879.
[107] Raymond Blake. *In black and white: a history of rowing at Dublin University* (Dublin, 1991), pp 15, 36.
[108] *Irish Times*, 22 Mar. 1872.
[109] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 9 Aug. 1879.
[110] *Tipperary Free Press*, 20 July 1880.
[111] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 9 Apr. 1879. In 1858 Taylor, a professional rower and boat-builder, was described as 'combining the practical skill of the waterman with the mental intelligence of the amateur'. Halladay. *Rowing in England*, p. 9.
[112] *Irish Times*, 26 May 1873; 11 July 1877.
[113] Blake. *In black and white*, p. 22.

The Clonmel club progressed with the continued purchase of new boats and ongoing improvements to the boat house and grounds surrounding it. Improvements to the club house and land acquisition close by gave the club infrastructure and permanence. The committee was making a bold statement that the club was there to stay. These improvements required capital. Continued appeals for subscriptions, and the regatta itself, were highlighted as reasons why the 'traders and other inhabitants of Clonmel' should maintain their support.[114] In 1879, at the annual meeting of the club, it was pointed out that the club had liabilities of £33 10*s* 10*d* but the president noted 'they had now a large yearly income, and he was glad to find they had now no occasion to look for that extraneous aid which they were compelled to ask for in former years'.[115] What he failed to point out was that the subscription list for the regatta would remain. Money was still required and accordingly lists of receipts were published in the local press in July 1879.[116] John Bagwell, Arthur Moore MP and Viscount Lismore led the way, each subscribing £5. Each band which played at the regatta received £2 from the rowing club as the whole enterprise ensured a circulation of money in the local community. Finance was an issue for any club and the Clonmel Rowing Club was no different. At the 1878 annual meeting it was stated that the boat house and club grounds represented a 'property valued at about £350,' while subscriptions in the main, continued to increase year on year. These were good omens for the future of the club (See Table 13).[117]

Clonmel Rowing Club made a vital contribution to local sporting recreation. Cricket remained an important sport in the region, but rowing gave an extra dimension to the sporting experiences now on offer. Both sports came together when they held an athletic sports

[114] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 3 July 1878.
[115] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 9 Apr. 1879.
[116] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 26 July 1879.
[117] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 13 Apr. 1878. £350 equates to £28,760 in 2012 when calculated on Measuring Worth.com website. Online at http://www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/ (Accessed 6 April 2014).

meeting in 1875, with seventeen different events making up the programme, though 'the majority of which [were] to be competed for by the members of the Clonmel Rowing Club and South Tipperary Cricket Club'.[118] While it was also noted that several of the events were 'open to all comers,' in fact it was a closed shop. Ordinary people could attend as spectators and enjoy the ancillary events, but not compete. These events were largely commercial and designed to extract as much money from the public as possible.

Table 13: Clonmel Rowing Club subscriptions, 1872-1877 (*Clonmel Chronicle*, 13 April 1878).

Year	Subscriptions received
1872	£39 19s 6d
1873	£47 1s 10d
1874	£57 10s
1875	£68 19s 6d
1876	£67 8s 6d
1877	£81 19s.

This section has looked at the emergence of rowing in south Tipperary in the 1870s. It outlined the growth of the Clonmel club, the only one that has survived. That the River Suir was navigable in Clonmel and Carrick-on-Suir greatly facilitated initiatives to have rowing as a sport in both communities. No evidence has come to light of rowing in the north of the county. Elsewhere, it was only at school sports days at Rockwell College that some regatta type events were added to the amusements on offer for the school boys.

Gentleman Amateur or Quasi-amateur?

This aspect of the chapter looks at the competitor in greater detail. Though the Amateur Athletic Club, in 1866-67, 'specifically excluded mechanics, artisans and labourers' from

[118] *Tipperary Free Press*, 21 Sept. 1875.

participating in sports, there was no comparable body in Ireland to regulate athletics.[119] With the formation of the Irish Champion Athletic Club (ICAC) by Henry W.D. Dunlop, in Dublin, in 1872, which attracted many of the leading athletes as members, an impetus was given to other communities to emulate them and establish an athletic club of their own.

From the outset, the ICAC attempted to 'impose some form of unified or central control on the management of Irish athletics'.[120] It sought to have All-Ireland championships on its grounds in Dublin which were open to all Irish gentleman amateurs. The Davin brothers (Figure 23) competed at these meetings. The success of Maurice in the weight throwing events resulted in his nomination to represent Ireland at international sports meetings in England.[121]

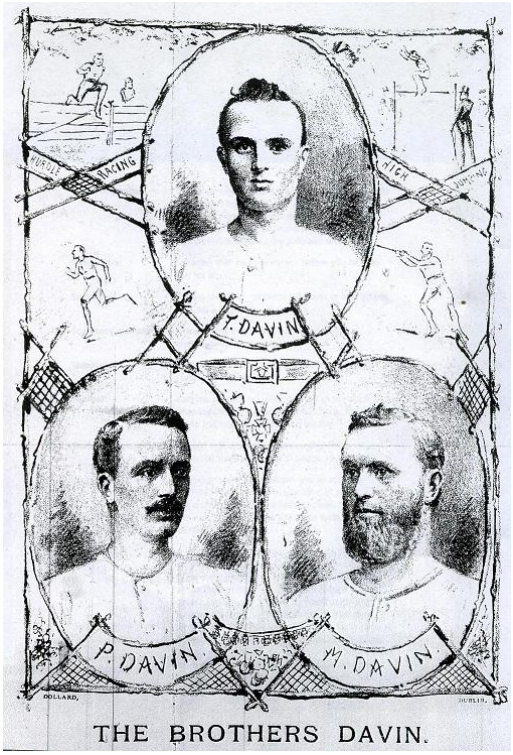

Figure 23: Tom, Pat and Maurice Davin, 1882. Detail from *Sport* newspaper.

[119] Tranter. *Sport, economy and society*, p. 42; Jeremy Crump. 'Athletics' in Tony Mason (ed.) *Sport in Britain: a social history* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 50.
[120] De Búrca. *Michael Cusack*, p. 45.
[121] De Búrca. *Michael Cusack*, p. 46. Ó Riain. *Maurice Davin*, pp 22-6.

From an analysis of the results of the various athletic events in Tipperary between1872 and 1878 it was clear that several men earned a handsome amount of prize money in the course of their athletic endeavours. It was not unusual for an athlete to enter and compete at several events on the same day. At the Powerstown sports in August 1872 William Foley of Carrick-on-Suir entered three events at a cost of one shilling each. However, he won the three events and took home £3 in prize money for his efforts.[122] He did not always have such a successful day. Having entered five events, again at the Powerstown sports in June 1873, he spent five shillings, but won only one event, for which he received a prize of a 'silver sugar bowl'.[123] Similarly, in competing at ten separate meetings between 1873 and 1877, Richard St. John of Mullinahone won £17 13*s*. 6*d*., two cups (one valued at thirty shillings) and a 'flask' out of thirty-two events in which he competed. Data from the press reports suggests that for half of these meetings, he paid one shilling entrance fee. One may assume that, he made a handsome return on his investment for an outlay of thirty shillings (Table 14).[124] St. John also brought with him a trait which was common to many other athletes - they competed as individuals. It was common for most competitors 'to identify themselves by reference to their parish, village, or their townland of birth.'[125] Yet what St. John did was no different to what many athletes did elsewhere. In the heart of Lancashire, Tom Marshall, a cotton loomer, supplemented his earnings of 'around £40 per annum' with prize money from athletics and football suggesting 'that running and playing football for money were commonplace in the 1870s in Lancashire'.[126]

[122] *Tipperary Free Press*, 9 Aug. 1872.
[123] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 28 June 1873.
[124] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 28 June 1873; 20 Aug. 1873; 29 Sept. 1875; 13 Oct. 1875; 26 Sept. 1877. *Freeman's Journal*, 21 May 1877. *Kilkenny Moderator*, 28 July 1877. *Nenagh Guardian*, 15 Sept. 1877. *Tipperary Free Press*, 23 Sept. 1873; 26 Sept. 1873; 8 Oct. 1875.
[125] O'Donoghue, *Irish championship athletics*, p. 7.
[126] Peter Swain. 'Cultural continuity and football in nineteenth-century Lancashire' in *Sport in History*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (December, 2008), p. 572.

Table 14: Athletic career of Richard St. John, Mullinahone, 1873-1877

Year	Source	Date	Meeting	Meeting Date	Name	Address	Event	Place	Entrance	Prize	Comment	Comment
1873	CC	28/06/1873	Powerstown	25/06/1873	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	300 yards hurdle	2	1s.	10s.		
1873	CC	28/06/1873	Powerstown	25/06/1873	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	Hop, step & jump	2	1s.	10s.		
1873	CC	20/08/1873	Killusty	14/08/1873	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	100 yards flat	2	1s.	10s.	8 ran	
1873	CC	20/08/1873	Killusty	14/08/1873	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	300 yards hurdle	2	1s.	10s.		
1873	CC	20/08/1873	Killusty	14/08/1873	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	600 yards hurdle	1	1s.	£1		
1873	CC	20/08/1873	Killusty	14/08/1873	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	Hop, step & jump	2	1s.	£1		
1873	TFP	26/09/1873	Mullinahone	19/09/1873	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	100 yards flat	1	1s.	£1		
1873	TFP	26/09/1873	Mullinahone	19/09/1873	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	300 yards hurdle	2	1s.	10s.		
1873	TFP	26/09/1873	Mullinahone	19/09/1873	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	600 yards hurdle	1	1s.	£1 10s.		
1873	TFP	23/09/1873	Kilsheelan	22/09/1873	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	100 yards flat	1	1s.	£1 5s.		
1873	TFP	23/09/1873	Kilsheelan	22/09/1873	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	300 yards hurdle	2	1s.	10s.	6 ran	
1873	TFP	23/09/1873	Kilsheelan	22/09/1873	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	Hop, step & jump	1	1s.	£1		
1873	TFP	23/09/1873	Kilsheelan	22/09/1873	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	600 yards hurdle	1	1s.	£1 1s.		
1875	CC	29/09/1875	Carrick on Suir	23/09/1875	Richard St. John	Kylatlea	100 yards open	3	?	0		
1875	CC	29/09/1875	Carrick on Suir	23/09/1875	Richard St. John	Kylatlea	440 yards	1	?	£1 10s.		
1875	CC	29/09/1875	Carrick on Suir	23/09/1875	Richard St. John	Kylatlea	Half mile race	1	?	£1	5 ran	
1875	CC	29/09/1875	Carrick on Suir	23/09/1875	Richard St. John	Kylatlea	1 mile race	1	?	£ 10s	4 ran	
1875	TFP	08/10/1875	Clonmel	07/10/1875	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	880 yards	1	?	Cup	9 started	30s or Cup
1875	TFP	08/10/1875	Clonmel	07/10/1875	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	1 mile race	1	?	Cup	10 started	
1875	CC	13/10/1875	Kilsheelan	11/10/1875	Richard St. John	Kylatea	100 yards (special prize)	2	?	£1	12 ran	
1875	CC	13/10/1875	Kilsheelan	11/10/1875	Richard St. John	Kylatea	120 yards hurdle	3	?	?	13 entered	
1875	CC	13/10/1875	Kilsheelan	11/10/1875	Richard St. John	Kylatea	440 yards	2	?	?	13 entered	
1877	IT	21/05/1877	Lansdowne Rd	19/05/1877	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	4 miles	0	?	?	Dropped out	
1877	KM	28/07/1877	Mullinahone	24/07/1877	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	Half mile	1	?	?		
1877	KM	28/07/1877	Mullinahone	24/07/1877	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	120 yards hurdle	2	?	?		
1877	KM	28/07/1877	Mullinahone	24/07/1877	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	440 yards hurdle	2	?	?		
1877	KM	28/07/1877	Mullinahone	24/07/1877	Richard St. John	Mullinahone	3 leg race 440 yards	1	?	?	& W. Pollard	
1877	NG	15/09/1877	Littleton	13/09/1877	Richard St. John	Slievenamon	220 yards flat	2	?	?		
1877	NG	15/09/1877	Littleton	13/09/1877	Richard St. John	Slievenamon	Half mile flat handicap	1	?	?	2 mins 20 sec	
1877	CC	26/09/1877	Graigue	Unknown	Richard St. John	Slievenamon	Hop, step & jump	2	?	Flask		
1877	CC	26/09/1877	Graigue	Unknown	Richard St. John	Slievenamon	2 miles walking	2	?	7s. 6d.		
1877	CC	26/09/1877	Graigue	Unknown	Richard St. John	Slievenamon	1 mile handicap flat	2	?	10s.		

Central to many of the rural and largely agrarian based meetings in Tipperary were weight throwing events. Throwing the 56lb weight or hammer was very popular at civilian meetings.[127] Weight throwing events were on the programme at all Tipperary sports meetings. At the Killusty sports, in August 1873, the fifteen events on the card were contested 'by a superior class of young men, generally the sons of farmers.'[128]

The participation of farmers' sons was as common for athletics as it was for hurling in Tipperary at the latter end of the century.[129] That it was so is of no great surprise as of the sixty-eight meetings identified in this chapter for which a day can be identified, nineteen took place on a Thursday (see Figure 24).[130] It would have been difficult for the ordinary working man to get time off work to compete in athletics. For the sons of tenant farmers it would not have been as problematic as farming was amenable to leave-taking. After Saturday, Monday was the most popular day for athletic sports, a day which was also popular for playing cricket. This demonstrates, in terms of sport, that it was necessary for the GAA to use Sunday for its games, making them more accessible to the working man who was not engaged in business.[131] Sunday was a day which appealed to all workers, inclusive of the farm labourer or the ordinary working man.[132]

Competing on a week day, mindful of the necessity for men to turn up for work and the cost of keeping a family, was outside the capacity of labourers. Also, there was no tradition of 'St.

[127] Carrick-on-Suir athletic sports *Clonmel Chronicle*, 3 Apr. 1872; Powerstown athletic sports *Clonmel Chronicle*, 17 July 1872; Killusty athletic sports *Tipperary Free Press*, 1 Aug. 1873.
[128] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 20 Aug. 1873.
[129] Tom Hunt. 'Tipperary hurlers, 1895-1900: A socio-economic profile' in *Tipperary Historical Journal 2009*, pp 119-121.
[130] This contradicts Ó Riain who stated that athletic sports meetings 'were usually held on a Sunday'. Ó Riain, *Maurice Davin*, p. 31. No meetings have been identified from Tipperary which took place on a Sunday.
[131] Neal Garnham. 'Accounting for the early success of the Gaelic Athletic Association' in *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 34, no. 133 (Mary 2004), pp 71-4.
[132] Farry. 'Popular sport in Ireland,' p. 79.

Monday' in Ireland, an excuse which was widely used in England when one was absent from work after over-indulging on the Sabbath.[133] Consequently, members of the professional class, military personnel, farmers, and their sons were mainly those who competed. Maurice Davin was from a farming background, his brother Pat was a solicitor and William Foley was a farmer, as was T.K. Dwyer. To be a man of independent means, in a profession, or an officer in the armed forces, made one worthy of inclusion as an amateur, provided one had never competed for money.

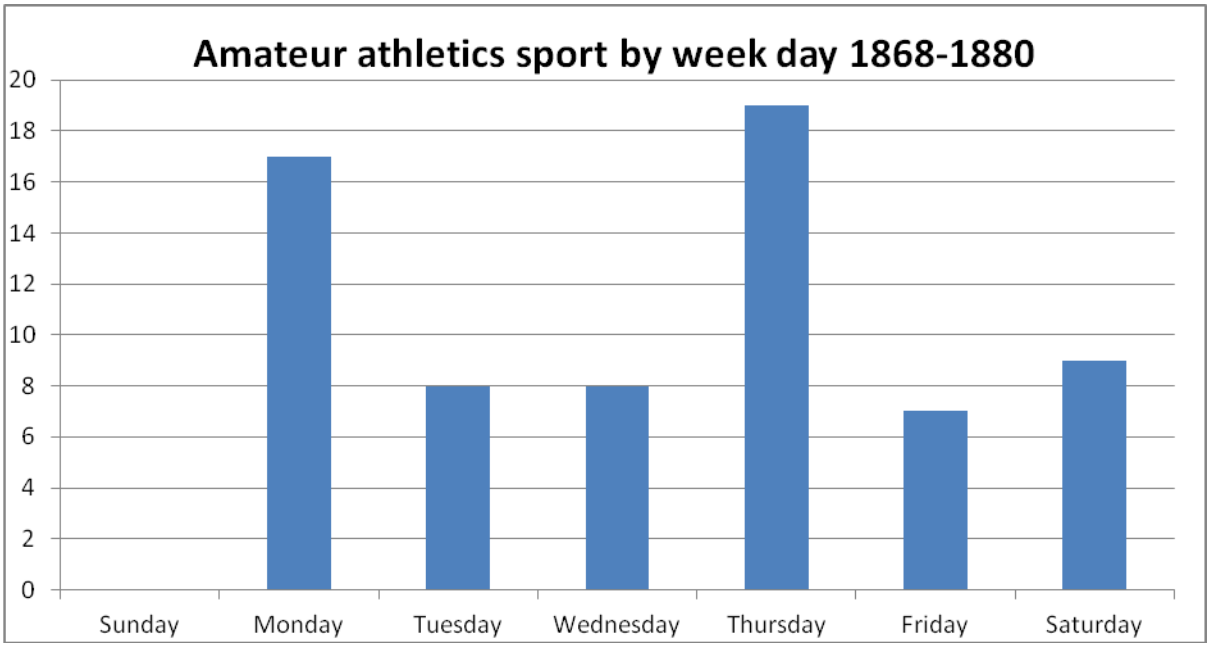

Figure 24: Athletics sports meeting in Co. Tipperary, 1868-1880, by week day (Total = 68)

Tipperary athletes, except for the Davin brothers and T.K. Dwyer, were not good enough to compete internationally. Evidence from the county showed that, at local events, athletes principally competed for money. The only major stumbling block was that of meeting the expense of the entrance fee. In England, class and social standing were important; 'for most of the social elite sport was an opportunity for differentiation not conciliation, and was used

[133] Dennis Brailsford. *British sport: a social history* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 68. Holt. *Sport and the British*, p. 61.

to restrict rather than expand contact with social inferiors.'[134] In essence 'the amateur rule [in England] was an instrument of class warfare.'[135] The same may be said of entrance fees and days when competitions were held in Tipperary irrespective of how the promotion of the sports was advertised.

Financial and work impediments restricted many men from competing. The emphasis of the rural Tipperary athlete was not the same as that of the clichéd Victorian aspiring to a healthy mind in a healthy body. A romantic might perceive it as an athlete trying to be the best at his chosen discipline for the 'credit of the little village'.[136] But more likely, money was there to be won and if an athlete like Richard St. John was good enough to win the money, he would.

In relation to athletics and rowing regattas, while these recreational sports differed the end result was the same. There were events on the programme to cater for amateurs and there were events which catered for the quasi-amateur. Apart from valuable cups and medals, there were also monetary prizes. With the appointment of Thomas Hoare as trainer in 1875 the Clonmel Rowing Club employed a professional to oversee what was, essentially, an amateur crew. The same occurred when he went to Shrewsbury in 1876 and trained the Pengwern Boat Club crew when 'the committee decided to employ a professional'.[137]

After the foundation of the GAA Michael Cusack was open to athletes getting cash prizes rather than 'fish knives and butter coolers'.[138] He argued that with the money they received

[134] Tranter. *Sport, economy and society*, p. 41.
[135] Guttman. *From ritual to record*, p. 31.
[136] Charles J. Kickham. *Knocknagow* or *The homes of Tipperary* (Dublin, 1887), p. 461. In this fictional account of a village in rural Tipperary, Matt the Thresher competed in local sports meetings throwing the hammer, which he did 'for the credit of the little village.' Kickham was from Mullinahone.
[137] Gerald Lindner, personal communication 7 January 2014.
[138] McAnallen. ''The greatest amateur association in the world'?,' p. 158.

they would be able to go out and buy the fish, butter or whatever it was that they needed.[139] In the true sense of amateur principles the ideology of Cusack stood out as inconsistent. There were several examples where rural Tipperary athletes flouted the amateur principles. While 'the new world of amateur sport became exclusive and emphasised the strength of class discrimination', it is argued here that this discrimination did not deter Irish athletes from competing for money.[140] Athletic sports in Ireland were similar to those in England in that they were not class neutral.[141] But what the evidence does suggest is that in Tipperary, as in county Westmeath, there was a form of popular athletics in existence below the level of elite participation. This world of popular athletics had nothing to do with the concept of amateurism as it was known in elite social circles. This world was inhabited by the rural middle-class farmer and his sons who had the time and money to participate on weekdays or whatever day suited them.

At an athletics sports meeting at Carrick-on-Suir in September 1875 the Davins were conspicuous by their absence. All the prizes were listed as monetary. The big winner of the day was Richard St. John. Of four events in which he competed, he won three and brought home £5 in total prize money. This was at a time when male farm labourers engaged in the harvest in the Carrick-on-Suir district received twelve shillings per week 'and their 'support,' with their female counterparts receiving thirteen shillings per week 'and their 'support'. It was noted that this was 'the first time in the history of local labour that the *other* sex received a higher rate of wages than their lords'.[142] In 1881, near Fethard, farm labourers earned ten

[139] Michael Cusack and A. Morrison Millar (eds). *The Celtic Times, Michael Cusack's Gaelic games newspaper*. (reprint Ennis, 2003), 6 Aug. 1887, p.
[140] M.A Speak, 'Social stratification and participation in sport in mid-Victorian England with particular reference to Lancaster, 1840-70,' in J.A. Mangan (ed.). *Pleasure, profit and proselytism. British culture and sport at home and abroad 1700-1914* (London, 1988), p. 59
[141] Norman Baker. 'Whose hegemony? The origins of the amateur ethos in nineteenth century English society' in *Sport in History* Vol. 24, No. 1 (Summer, 2004), p. 3.
[142] *Tipperary Free Press*, 24 Aug. 1875.

pence per day, while other farm employees earned sums ranging from one shilling per day to six pounds per annum depending on their contract.[143] As has been noted for St. John, he was financially rewarded for his victories over the course of five years. This success bordered on professionalism, with the prize money from the sports in 1875 the equivalent of one year's wages for farm labourers. Yet, he was allowed to participate in the four mile race at the Irish Champion Athletic Club sports at Lansdowne Road in May 1877.[144] His previous record should have been sufficient to deem him ineligible. In Ireland, as in England, 'it is unlikely that the rule [relating to amateur status] was always strictly enforced.'[145] Hence there was no great fuss made about amateurism in athletics until Michael Cusack entered the fray. Cusack objected to 'pot hunters,' claiming that abuses had crept into Irish athletics on foot of adopting events and styles then common in England. Cusack appears to suffer from ignorance, or amnesia, in this respect as the evidence from Tipperary shows that several athletes, such as St. John, were very adept at pot-hunting at various sports meetings in the county throughout the 1870s. They were not alone in this respect as 'several promising men were turning up at every meeting, particularly in the South of Ireland.'[146]

This is the crux of the amateur debate in an Irish context. There were true amateur sportsmen who competed at Trinity College races, as well as at the Irish Champion Athletic Club meetings. However, in rural Ireland, there were athletes who competed at a level below that of the true amateur, who neither cared for nor were interested in amateur principles. Rather, the debates and discussions that took place in England and elsewhere were largely academic and of interest only to a small number of men. For this body of competitive athletes in Ireland

[143] Cormac Ó Gráda. 'The wages book of a Fethard farmer, 1880-1905' in Marcus Bourke (ed.) *Tipperary Historical Journal 1994*, pp 69-71.
[144] *Freeman's Journal*, 21 May 1877, p. 2; *Irish Times*, 21 May 1877, p. 3.
[145] Crump. 'Athletics,' p. 51.
[146] Davin, *Recollections of a veteran athlete*, p. 15.

the amateur debate was totally irrelevant and this was the constituency which the GAA tapped into.

In this section what was noticeable was that social differentiation and exclusion were part and parcel of the athletic and rowing meetings in Victorian Tipperary and Ireland. The small number of participants in events meant that some meetings were not held due to insufficient athletes turning up. With as few as three competitors in some athletic events, it was evident that there were just not enough men willing to participate, mindful that Tipperary was not just a region of artisans and labourers. A lack of sufficient athletes ensured that the regular cycle of prize money fell into the hands of a few familiar journeymen athletes who operated on a semi-professional basis.

This was indicative of low competitor numbers. There was little point in an average athlete or weight thrower trying to compete against the likes of Maurice Davin, for example. The lack of numbers suggests that there was a kind of natural selection in operation with only the fittest surviving to take on the big boys. Also, 'membership of a sporting institution' was a luxury which the Tipperary labourers and working class man could not afford.[147] In that respect they were on a par with their contemporaries in other parts of Great Britain and Ireland. Athletic events drew spectators. Hence the large attendance figures at the various meetings. This did not ultimately promote a general sense of participation so consequently the number of participants remained small. For the vast majority their only means of participation was as spectators. They had drinking opportunities, musical bands and side-shows to enjoy, all of which helped to relieve them of their money.

[147] Neil Tranter. 'The chronology of organized sport in nineteenth-century Scotland: a regional study. II-causes' in *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (1990), p. 376.

Conclusion

This chapter set out to chronicle the growth and development of organised athletics and rowing in Tipperary. Mindful of the circumstances which the country faced prior to the end of the 1860s with famine, social unrest, and international wars, the overall trend is one of athletics events spreading northwards from south Tipperary. Whereas the ICAC attracted the leading athletes to its championship meetings in Dublin, the local meetings in Tipperary were initially established by a local community or club, which was often a cricket club such as the Roscrea CYMS CC or Nenagh CC.

The role of the military in promoting athletic sports cannot be underestimated. While reports of 'pedestrianism' featured irregularly in the press, one can confidently assume that there were other instances which have gone unrecorded. Where the military were instrumental was that they put in place a programme of athletic events which, though typically confined to military personnel, were in essence the foundation of subsequent events for the wider community. At Fethard, this evidenced itself with both military and civilian events on the one programme, something which was later replicated at Nenagh and Templemore. However, unlike the military, the impact of schools was negligible in relation to the promotion of athletics and involvement with the wider community. While there were three principal schools which held a series of annual sports, this number is far too small to indicate an advocacy for athleticism in a rural context. As far as Tipperary was concerned, there was no athletic driving force which resulted from the school network.

Rather, the impetus manifested itself in south Tipperary. Carrick-on-Suir was the primary athletic hub. That this was due initially to Maurice Davin's decision to opt for a career in athletics as opposed to rowing. It was one of the main factors but so too was the influence of

his brothers, Pat and Tom. The competitive edge which they gave to Irish athletes in championship meetings against English representatives in both Dublin and London only served to enhance the reputation of Irish athletics. In 1884, Michael Cusack castigated the abuses which had crept into Irish athletics.[148] There is no evidence to suggest that these abuses were common in Tipperary athletics by the end of 1880 or indeed at subsequent sports events up to 1884. Weight and hammer throwing events were still part of the athletics programme and, if absent from some meetings, one of the primary reasons was that no-one wished to compete against Maurice Davin.[149] Davin, in reply to the mutterings of Cusack, was correct in noting 'many of the Irish games which, although much practiced, are not included in the events on programmes of athletic sports.'[150] Davin felt that it was the absence of these events at athletic sports meetings around the country which had led to their decline rather than abuses associated with athletics in general. True, there were some spectator incursions at athletic meetings in Nenagh; betting took place on some events, and monetary prizes were on offer at virtually all meetings. This was typical of a sporting environment still in its infancy. It had nothing to do with Unionist politics, as later argued by Cusack. The athletic meetings in Tipperary cannot be viewed as detrimental to hammer and weight throwing events principally because they still appeared on the programme and were, as Davin noted, 'much practiced'.

Unlike Westmeath, admission fees were a feature of the athletic sporting environment in Tipperary.[151] The examples from Nenagh and Carrick-on-Suir are early in terms of how sporting bodies sought to regulate general admission to specific meetings. Reserved

[148] *United Ireland*, 11 Oct. 1884, p. 2.
[149] Ó Riain, *Maurice Davin*, p. 26.
[150] *United Ireland*, 18 Oct. 1884, p 2.
[151] The Mullingar spring meeting of 1903 was the first sporting event to impose a general admission fee of 6*d*. Hunt. *Sport and society*, p. 223.

enclosures and grandstands had a history of charging for the privilege of being in the fashionable arena. In 1876 a fee for general admission was charged by the Nenagh CC, indicative of a move towards a regulated, commercial sporting event designed to maximize profit while also imposing a social barrier.

As for the athletes themselves, there is no doubt that the monetary prizes were incentive enough to travel and participate at meetings throughout Tipperary and elsewhere during the 1870s. The gamble of entering a number of events, for whatever it cost, was well worth it, as the leading men took home good prize money. The sport could not survive without men to compete and for a specific meeting to succeed it needed to attract the leading competitors. Simply put, neither could exist without the other. Patronage and subscriptions meant that, by and large, general admission fees were not levied. The foundation of a club in Templemore, likely owed much of its impetus to the military in the town. The Carrick club was established in 1879, with moves made to establish new clubs in Clonmel and Tipperary Town also in that year. That future events surrounding the foundation of the GAA in 1884 impacted on the life of these clubs is outside the remit of this chapter, but the corner stone of athletics in Tipperary had been laid with the advent of the athletics sports meeting in the 1870s.

Similarly with rowing in Clonmel, a central hub was established around which an influential body of men took control. The club committee was proactive in engaging the services of a professional trainer to assist the club in becoming successful. That this was not always the case does not reflect on the training regime but rather upon the willingness of the crews to train to the required standard. It suggests that some social status was conferred simply by being a member of the club as opposed to being an active participant. But, like athletics, rowing was caught between the amateur and quasi-amateur. Though one of the Clonmel

rowers, C. Garner, competed for Dublin University, indicative of his amateur status, the club also catered for watermen's wherry races, the latter competing for monetary prizes.[152] In small -own rural Ireland, the ability of many clubs to survive was dependent on their ability to attract as many members as possible to their ranks. This membership never presumed an association with any particular religion or political persuasion. Rather, both the amateur and quasi-amateur existed side by side, with specific races for each class of competitor. This dual status process was not typical of the meetings which Cusack alluded to in his tirade against the abuses in athletics, but they were typical of the meetings in Tipperary of the 1870s.

[152] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 9 Aug. 1879; 17 July 1880.

Chapter 6: Ball Games

Introduction

This chapter explores the various ball games played in County Tipperary between 1840 and 1880. As croquet and lawn tennis are explored in Chapter Two the attention here focuses on other ball games, some of which required the use of a stick or bat. This chapter is divided into three sections. Section one explores ball games in which the feet and hands are used. Section two features those that use a bat or hurley. Section three looks at ball games played with the hands, principally handball and fives, though evidence for the latter is minimal.

To support the findings of this thesis, this chapter demonstrates that the role of the landed and military officer classes were instrumental in the promotion of all forms of ball games with one notable exception, that of hurling. In relation to football, the landed class in south Tipperary played a style of football known to them, which they probably learned at school. This they played amongst themselves on an irregular basis. When military officers are added into the mix, the games take on elements of codification. Features of the association football code become apparent. Rugby union was directly introduced by the military officers. Similar claims may be made for the advancement of cricket countywide, as is outlined later in this chapter. Hurling took on a different character. Throughout the whole era of this thesis, it was the only sport which was wholly representative of the tenant farmer and labouring classes. Hurling was shunned by the descendants of those families who patronised it in the eighteenth century. It survived the vagaries of law makers who, in the legislative process, made sport in public spaces a restricted activity. It also survived the Great Famine and, as this chapter clearly demonstrates, it was a game which was not anywhere near extinction in the mid-

nineteenth century, though famine and emigration were factors which greatly impacted on the amount of hurling played countrywide.

Much of the written history of Tipperary sport commences in 1884, consistent with the foundation of the GAA.[1] Where comment was given on pre-GAA hurling and football it was based more on folklore and generalisation than on empirical research. 'The early days of football, athletics, handball and hurling' was outlined by Philip Fogarty, but he failed to give any citation for sources used.[2] Another chronicler noted that 'it is generally accepted that hurling was not widely played in Tipperary in the years between the famine and the foundation of the GAA'.[3] However, Neal Garnham has given an outline of football playing in Ireland from 1518 up to the mid-nineteenth century when it was 'if not completely extinct, something of a rarity'.[4] This chapter adds to the knowledge of football playing in Ireland by indentifying and categorising various forms of football from County Tipperary. These football games are put into context within Ireland and Great Britain. Their presence challenges the consensus view that ball games were a rarity in the country prior to 1884.

Folk football was as likely to occur in Tipperary as it was to take place in other parts of Ireland or Great Britain. Large gatherings of adult males congregated on Shrove Tuesday to play in games of street football at various locations in England in the eighteenth century.[5] Concerned with the welfare of the town inhabitants and shopkeepers, the civic authorities

[1] While some rugby and lawn tennis clubs have histories which commence in the 1870s, the majority of the books on sport in Tipperary are GAA related and they start in the years post 1884. Golf did not feature at this time.
[2] Fogarty, *Tipperary's GAA*, pp 13-7.
[3] Bob Stakelum. *Gaelic games in Holycross Ballycahill 1884-1990*. (Holycross, 1992), p. xi.
[4] Neal Garnham. *Association football and society in pre-partition Ireland.* (Belfast, 2004), pp 2-4.
[5] Emma Griffin. *England's revelry: a history of popular pastimes 1660-1830* (Oxford, 2005), pp 104-07. Richard Sanders. *Beastly fury: the strange birth of British football* (London, 2009), pp 6-8.

sought to 'suppress the practice [due to] the great nuisance it caused'.[6] This is an important aspect when correlated with the evidence from Ireland. As is demonstrated in this chapter, the government, civic and constabulary authorities in Ireland tried to prevent the playing of ball games on public roads or on town streets. It had nothing to do with the fact that these were Irish men and boys playing football or hurling, it was to do with civic order. There was nowhere in Ireland, let alone England, in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, where authorities took offence to ball sports in themselves. In common with England 'it was the location of the sport that was contentious'.[7] There was little difference between a bellman crying down kite flying in Wakefield, Yorkshire, in the 1780s and a young boy reprimanded at Clonmel Petty Sessions for flying a kite on the street in 1856[8] Both were perceived as a nuisance to townspeople.

Crucially though, comment on the decline of hurling in the aftermath of the Famine, up to the foundation of the GAA, has been overstated. While it is acknowledged that contemporary accounts state that hurling was in decline, there was no yardstick offered from which to judge if this was actually true or if it was just believed to be true. Lack of evidence has transferred belief into fact. A writer on the GAA in Tipperary has argued that 'Irish history from "the famine" (*sic*) to the start of the Gaelic Athletic Association is bitter in the extreme and it is little surprise to find that in this its darkest period, the native sport practically collapsed altogether'.[9] Using evidence from Ireland and Australia, this chapter clearly shows that there was widespread playing of hurling prior to the foundation of the GAA. The perceived absence of hurling was a revisionist view by the early promoters of the GAA which put them

[6] Griffin. *England's revelry*, p. 106.
[7] Griffin. *England's revelry*, p. 107.
[8] Griffin. *England's revelry*, p. 107; National Archives of Ireland. Clonmel, Court Service: Petty Sessions Order Book. 1/2850, No. 228. 28 October 1856.
[9] Fogarty. *Tipperary's GAA*, p. 16.

into a heightened position. They used the real or imagined absence of ball games in the post-Famine period to promote the role of the GAA in preserving, cultivating and reviving Irish games and pastimes. It has been argued that the Famine years were a watershed period in Irish sport, specifically relating to games which were perceived to be of Irish origin.[10] This chapter disproves this belief. It demonstrates that various styles of football and hurling were widely played in Tipperary in the intervening period between the Famine and the foundation of the GAA.

Ball playing with the hands was recorded in Ireland from 1720 and 1740.[11] Of the evidence identified in the press, reports were not specific in terms of the characteristics associated with ball-playing or indeed the type of game which was played. Where ball-playing was noted, this is inferred as playing ball with one's hands. In the Census of Ireland reports, a 'description of industrial pursuits and amusements practised' was recorded for various asylums around the country.[12] At Clonmel Asylum 'ball-playing' was permitted but in relation to the Central Criminal Asylum in Dublin, the term 'football' was used. This suggests that enumerators had a specific record sheet to differentiate various sports and recreations and infers that there were two styles of play involved.[13] This differentiation is important as it sets a standard from which to assess the merits of ball-related activities. If a football was used, the contemporary report will refer to 'football' or 'kicking a football'.[14]

[10] De Búrca notes that 'amongst the major casualties of the Famine were the field games and other traditional pastimes of rural Ireland, which in many areas suffered an irreversible decline'. De Búrca. *The GAA*, p. 5. Seamus J. King. *A history of hurling* (Dublin, 1996), p. 40.
[11] Jack Mahon. *A history of Gaelic football* (Dublin, 2000), pp 2-3.
[12] *Census of Ireland for the year 1851. Part III: Report on the statues of disease* (Dublin, 1851).
[13] *Census of Ireland 1851*, pp 60-1.
[14] For instance at Clonmel Petty Sessions, on 10 November 1857, John McGrath was charged with causing a 'nuisance on the street by kicking a football'. Court Service: Petty Sessions Order Book. 1/2853, No. 100, while on 29 August 1858, Michael Mullins was charged with 'ball playing in the public street'. Court Service: Petty Sessions Order Book. 1/2855, No. 256.

Where 'ball-playing' was noted, this is inferred to be a style of play in which the participant's hands were used.

Football

This first section looks at the growth and development of the various codes of football in Tipperary, both prior to the codification process in England and the years subsequent to it. Football at this time was unstructured, largely undefined and under-reported in the local press. Due to the uncertainty as to the precise nature of what was deemed football in the years preceding codification, the nature of this play has been ascribed to that of 'folk football'.[15] This type of football was local in nature. Rules were largely arbitrary and likely agreed prior to the commencement of the game. These games were played on feast days and holidays which were part of local traditions, marking the passage of seasons. In southern Ireland, one such form of the game was called *cad*. A letter writer to the *Irish Times*, in 1968, gave an overview of *cad* as played in the nineteenth century. It also contained the Webb Ellis myth, noting that 'an English boy, William Webb Ellis, learned the game from his cousins in Tipperary and by running with the ball restarted it at Rugby School in 1823'.[16]

In Tipperary reports of football were recorded in court records and press reports. Instances of public order offences, typically due to ball playing on the street or a breach of the laws relating to the Sabbath, resulted in the appearance of men and boys before the courts, if apprehended.[17] Football in Tipperary, contemporary with that in Derby and Newark-on-

[15] See for example Tranter. *Sport, economy and society*, pp 8-11.
[16] *The Irish Times*, 23 Jan. 1968. The author of the letter subsequently acknowledged that he 'was relying on hearsay when he pointed out that Webb Ellis had learned the game of cad from his cousins in Tipperary'. Edmund Van Esbeck. *Irish rugby 1874-1999: a history*. (Dublin, 1999), p. 9.
[17] *Tipperary Free Press*, 16 Aug. 1845; *Nenagh Guardian*, 17 Feb. 1866; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 19 Sept. 1863; 23 Dec. 1865.

Trent, was, for the most part, a sport of the working man.[18] There were also issues of patronage underpinning the diffusion of sport, especially with the rugby union code. As this discussion shows, the role of the officer class in some of the military garrisons was critical to the growth of rugby football, something which the foundation of the GAA did not break.

Apart from rugby, there is slight evidence to infer that patronage was afforded to the other football codes, in the same way that it was given to horse racing, athletics, or cricket. In 1869, at Marfield, Clonmel, on the Bagwell estate, such were the social and economic backgrounds of those participating in a football game, that the evidence suggests a game originating with the landowning class. This game took place 'between a scratch team of gentlemen' representative of Marlfield and Gurteen estates. The Marlfield team emerged 'victors by two bases to none'.[19] Elements of the game, as recorded in the local press, notably the scoring system, led a leading English football historian, Tony Collins, to conclude that they were playing football according to Harrow School rules. It was the 'the first report of a Harrow rules match that [he had] seen outside of the school itself'.[20] Eight of the players identified in the report were confirmed as Old Harrovians, while a couple of others mentioned were not positively verified.[21] For instance, two of the participants, Richard and William Bagwell, Marlfield, had left Harrow in 1859 and 1864 respectively.[22] This report demonstrated that a cross fertilisation of cultural and sporting influence was taking place.

However, the limited incidence of this type of football was a reflection of the elite nature of the game rather than an indication that it was popular in south Tipperary. While this report

[18] Tranter, *Sport, economy and society*, p. 11.
[19] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 16 Jan. 1869.
[20] Tony Collins. Personal communication, 21 Jan. 2012.
[21] Rita M. Boswell. (Archivist, Harrow School), personal communication, 27 Jan. 2012.
[22] *The Harrow school register 1800-1911* (Harrow, 1911), pp 266, 357

indicates that Harrow rules football took place in the south of the county, one has to be careful not to 'interpret grandly from a short supply of material' and, in this instance, the evidence is very slight.[23] For in essence there was no further diffusion of this type of football. If it could not gain wider acceptance in London outside of Harrow School, it was even less likely that it would gain a foothold in south Tipperary where a few old boys got together for a match, a report of which one of them or their party, submitted to the local press.

For those lower down the social ladder, while opportunities for football playing did exist, their endeavours, by and large, were never recorded in the press. Consequently, analysis as to which form of folk football was played is hard to determine. Where records do exist, primarily for Sabbath offences, these resulted in the appearance of participants, regularly children, before the local magistrates. On 19 February 1849, a bill for 'the more speedy trial and punishment of offences in Ireland' was passed. Critical to play and sport was Section III, where it was enacted 'that every person shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding forty shillings who shall, in any street, road, thoroughfare, or public place, commit any of the following offences…play at football or bowling or hurling, or any other game'.[24] Due to a lack of patronage and lands on which to play various games, men and boys took the only alternative left open to them which was to take the games out onto the public roadway. Playing games on the street became an offence. If apprehended, prosecution followed, as the legislators sought to stop the nuisance caused by these men and boys on the 'public thoroughfare'. It was not that there was a ban on playing games but rather it was where these games took place which was the issue. With no access to land on which to play sport it was

[23] J.A. Mangan. *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian public school* (London, 2000), p. 3.
[24] *1849 (45) Offences. (Ireland) A bill for the more speedy trail and punishment of offences in Ireland* (London, 1849) pp 2-3.

little wonder that some games went into decline. Games which did not meet with the approval of those who had land at their disposal were most likely to suffer.

Similarly, in the Highways (Ireland) Bill 1853, one of the clauses related to penalties incurred by persons playing 'at football or any other game on any part of the said highways.'[25] This limited the ability of ordinary people to play sport. At Clonmel, when some boys appeared before the Mayor's Court, the mayor noted that 'the system of ball playing in the streets and public thoroughfares [had] become a most tolerable nuisance'.[26] In this instance, the extent to which patronage existed was demonstrated when a man intervened on behalf of the boys and 'promised to be security for their future good conduct.' As a consequence of his intervention, the mayor refused to send the boys to jail. However, subsequent mayors of Clonmel also had to deal with complaints of ball playing in the streets and churchyards of the town. Several of those prosecuted were children. Other instances related to trespass while playing football.[27] These attempts to rid the streets of activities which created a nuisance for townsfolk, shopkeepers and other business interests were reflective of what was also happening in Great Britain, with concerns about public order and the security of property used to provide a rationale for the clampdown.[28]

Where prosecutions were recorded in the contemporary Tipperary press the majority of the incidences reported show that there were only a small number of participants involved in each offence. Typically, two or three boys appeared before the courts, but there is no way of telling how many were actually playing before the police intervened. But there is some

[25] *Highways (Ireland) 1853, a bill to consolidate and amend the laws relating to highways in Ireland* (London 1853), pp 42-3.
[26] *Tipperary Free Press*, 16 Aug. 1845.
[27] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 13 Aug. 1862; 16 Aug. 1862; 4 July 1863; 19 Sept. 1863; 13 Nov. 1872. *Nenagh Guardian*, 28 Jan 1865; 10 Feb. 1877.
[28] Tranter. *Sport, economy and society*, p. 4. Sanders. *Beastly fury*, p. 11.

evidence to suggest that football of a more structured nature, in terms of large numbers of men coming together to play, also took place. In February 1866 outside Templemore, in the north of the county, seven men were prosecuted for playing football at College Hill on the Sabbath.[29] Also, near Templemore, on the Longorchard estate at Templetuohy, there was an opportunity for tenants on the estate to play 'a match of football' during harvest home celebrations.[30] This was not only a feature of harvest celebrations in Ireland, it was also an aspect of harvest festivals in England.[31] This suggests that there was a cultural continuation of football in existence, rather than that the game was passed down by those who had learned it at public school.[32] This is a critical point in the football aspect of this thesis. This is evidence of folk football in its purest historical setting, local versions based around the religious and agricultural calendar.

There did not exist in Ireland, let alone Tipperary, a public school structure which was as widespread, or as influential, as the public school model which existed in Great Britain.[33] Tipperary Grammar School and Clonmel School were active in the promotion of the rugby code. No evidence has come to light of association football at these schools. Other schools also promoted football but the way in which it was reported in the local press makes it difficult to determine the exact form played. These instances are interpreted as variations of folk football. Football playing in the post-Famine period appears to have been a continuation of the games which took place in the 1830s and early 1840s. Casual football took place on

[29] *Nenagh Guardian*, 17 Feb. 1866.
[30] *Tipperary Free Press*, 18 Nov. 1856.
[31] Mike Huggins. *The Victorians and sport* (Hambledon and London, 2004), p. 45.
[32] R.J. Holt. 'Football and the urban way of life in nineteenth-century Britain' in J.A. Mangan (ed.) *Pleasure, profit and proselytism: British culture and sport at home and abroad 1700-1914.* (London, 1988), p. 71.
[33] See for example the study carried out by J.A. Mangan. *Athleticism in the public school*.

open spaces, irrespective of the consequences of falling foul of the local constabulary and magistrates. It was a feature of football in Ireland and Great Britain.[34]

Football According to Irish Rules

The type of football played in Tipperary in the years prior to the foundation of the GAA is difficult to ascertain with any degree of certainty. It is unclear whether some of these games were a version of football which was of specific Irish origin. One Gaelic games historian noted that all the non-Gaelic football codes, with the possible exception of Australian Rules, 'had their origin in the different types of football played in English public schools'.[35] It was also noted that in the early 1860s 'football was played regularly in south Tipperary'.[36] During this time the various football codes had more features in common than they had differences.[37] This makes differentiation of the codes all the more difficult, unless specific comments are made from which one can conclusively demonstrate which code was actually played. It was something that was not unique to Tipperary.

In Ireland a football match between teams from Cork and Waterford was recorded in the spring of 1878, while another match, between two parishes in north Cork, took place a couple of weeks later.[38] Once more, one cannot be specific as to which code was played. In 1880, four years prior to the foundation of the GAA, football matches were played in mid-Tipperary. Each side had twenty-one players a side and each was representative of four distinct local parish units.[39] When the GAA was founded in 1884 these same parish units

[34] Holt, 'Football and the urban way of life,' p. 71. Tony Mason. 'Football' in Tony Mason (ed.) *Sport in Britain: a social history* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 150.
[35] Puirséal. *The GAA in its time*, p. 31.
[36] De Búrca. *The GAA*, p. 6.
[37] Tony Collins. 'History, theory and the 'civilizing process'' in *Sport in History*, Vol. 25, No. 2. (August 2005), pp 294-5.
[38] *Cork Examiner*, 26 Feb. 1878; 12 March 1878.
[39] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 14 Feb. 1880; 5 May 1880.

were the basis on which clubs were formed. Evidence of these matches suggests that there was an embryonic parochial structure already in place, prior to the GAA, mindful that early GAA teams also had twenty-one players aside.[40] But whether these games were still a version of folk football or a style of football played according to Irish rules is not clear. The parochial nature of the teams and the regularity of playing numbers in each match suggests that there was a style of football generic to mid-Tipperary which had taken on elements of codification. This local variation was played by teams representing Templemore, Thurles, Moycarkey and Two-Mile-Borris.[41]

In the north of the county there is evidence which points to another type of football game which was played by teams in the rural communities in the hinterland of Nenagh. The account book of Kilruane Football Club from 1876 to 1880 refers to games which were not recorded in the local press.[42] In it, matches between the Kilruane club and the 53rd Regiment (Nenagh Garrison) are recorded, as are matches against Carrigatoher FC and Kileen FC. At this time, clubs carried the football club initial – FC – after the club name. Clanwilliam, Limerick and Clonmel were other clubs that followed this style.[43] Membership of the Kilruane club cost four shillings on 1 April 1877.[44] A match against the 53rd regiment and a book on football, which cost seven pence, suggests that the game may have been rugby union in format, but the exact nature of the play is unknown. The number of players which featured on games varied from fifteen to twenty-five, which is indicative that rules were fluid and open to change, depending on how many men showed up, or were asked to play. Similar to mid-Tipperary, the evidence suggests that here another nucleus of teams were accustomed to

[40] Joe Lennon. *The playing rules of football and hurling 1602 – 2010*. (Gormanstown, 2001), p. 10.
[41] The club histories of Templemore, Moycarkey and Two-Mile-Borris make no reference to these games. There is no club history of Thurles published at the time of writing.
[42] National Library of Ireland. Ms. 9515. Account book and records of Kilruane Football Club, 1876-1880.
[43] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 15 Nov. 1879; 14 Jan. 1880; 11 Oct. 1882.
[44] Account book and records of Kilruane Football Club, 1876-1880

a specific version of football. Together they show that football playing among teams of local men was not unknown in the pre-GAA era.

Rugby Union Football

This section investigates the development of rugby union football in the county. In 1854, a football club was formed in Trinity College, Dublin, 'by a number of former pupils of Rugby and Cheltenham schools in England'.[45] On the basis of the evidence so far identified, this club was the first one which was associated with rugby union football in Ireland. With the establishment of the Irish Football Union in 1874 and its later amalgamation with the Northern Football Union to form the Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU) in 1879 a national structure was in place to oversee the development of rugby union football in the country.[46] By that stage Ireland had played its first international fixture against England at the Kennington Oval, in 1875.[47] The presence of a national body assisted the growth of rugby football as it oversaw the development of the branch unions in Munster, Leinster and Ulster in 1877. Connaught was represented for the first time at an IRFU meeting in 1886.[48] The IRFU was then representative of rugby in all of Ireland and its central authority was pivotal to the development of the game.

In Canada, 'officers of the local British army garrison' introduced the game to the students of McGill University, Montreal, in 1865.[49] When reports of rugby union in Tipperary appeared, they too featured play between the military and local teams. The military were instrumental in the introduction of rugby football to Nenagh. On 27 December 1875, expressions of

[45] Neal Garnham. *The origins and development of football in Ireland being a reprint of R.M. Peter's Irish football annual of 1880*. (Belfast, 1999), p. 3.
[46] Sean Diffley. *The men in green: the story of Irish rugby*. (Dublin, 1973), pp 13-4
[47] Van Esbeck. *Irish rugby*, p. 327.
[48] Van Esbeck. *Irish rugby*, pp 26, 37.
[49] Tony Collins. *A social history of English rugby union.* (London, 2009), p. 17.

thanks were expressed to the commanding officer of the 50th (Queen's Own) Regiment 'for the kind manner in which he threw open both barracks and field to the townspeople of Nenagh with the rules of rugby union, which Lieutenant Carr took great trouble to explain to the Nenagh men. This was their first attempt at the game.'[50] Reminiscent of the 79th Highlanders before them, the departure of the 50th Regiment from Nenagh was lamented in the *Guardian.* It was remarked that 'no corps ever left the town more deservedly regretted, as a most cordial relationship existed since the football matches of last season, and the courtesy of the officers on these occasions … made them well worthy of the compliment paid them yesterday on their departure'.[51]

In both Tipperary town and Clonmel, the impetus for the rugby game stemmed initially from the grammar schools in 1878. Grammar schools were the elite schools in the county. However, there were only a few schools which were evident in the promotion of sport. Tipperary Grammar School, St. John's College, Newport, Rockwell College and St. Cronan's School, Roscrea were the only schools which appeared with any regularity in the local press where school sport was recorded. In Tipperary town, a team drawn from the 15th Regiment garrisoned were regular opponents of both the grammar school team and the Clanwilliam Football Club.[52] These meetings further demonstrate the level of diffusion which came from the military stimulus. In Tipperary, it was claimed that the grammar school 'fostered' the game in the town.[53] The school continued to promote the rugby code and to this extent its principal, Rev. Lindsay, sought out some of his former pupils, then residing near Newport, on the Tipperary – Limerick border, to play a match against his school team.[54]

[50] *Nenagh Guardian*, 29 Dec. 1875.
[51] *Nenagh Guardian*, 10 June 1876.
[52] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 29 Oct. 1879; 5 Nov. 1879; 15 Nov. 1879; 22 Nov. 1879; 13 Mar. 1880.
[53] Garnham. *Origins and development of football in Ireland*, p. 65.
[54] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 11 Dec. 1878; 29 Nov. 1879.

Knowledge of the game gradually extended outwards. At the time the Newport team was but a collection of men and boys brought together to play rugby without any formal club actually in existence. Though these schools were playing rugby, their overall impact was slight.

Though brief, this analysis of the early years of rugby suggests that military officers stationed in the town barracks were a common denominator in its introduction in Nenagh and Tipperary. These men were not only the game's first patrons from whom men and boys men and boys in Nenagh and Tipperary learned the rules of the game, they also supplied the opposition. Though a team was assembled in Nenagh in 1875, there was no actual rugby club until Nenagh Ormond RFC was established in 1884.[55] In the south of the county, a rugby club was established in Clonmel in 1882.[56]

Association Football

The last football code to warrant analysis is that of association football. If the evidence for the union code is limited for the county, then that of the association game is all the less tangible. There is a difficulty in categorising this football code based on press reports alone. That problem aside, this section proves that not only was association football played in Tipperary at the latter end of the 1870s but also that its appearance has hitherto gone unnoticed. Its presence in the county predates by seventeen years that which was previously believed to have been the earliest example of the association code.[57] Unlike rugby union, cricket and the GAA, there has been no comprehensive research or history undertaken on the growth or development of association football in Ireland at a micro-level. It is as if there has been no urgency, initiative or interest on behalf of association football historians at a national

[55] *Nenagh Guardian*, 29 Mar. 1884; 12 Apr. 1884. See also Donal A. Murphy. *Nenagh Ormond's century1884-1984: a rugby history*. (Nenagh, 1984).
[56] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 11 Oct. 1882.
[57] Garnham. *Origins and development of football in Ireland*, p. 19.

or local level to seriously chronicle the development of the game in Ireland, as Neal Garnham has noted.[58] Garnham has provided a basis from which to redress this historical imbalance but the lack of investigative analysis at the micro-level continues to be an issue. While not claiming to have achieved this objective here in relation to Tipperary, this section begins to explore the heretofore unexplored development of association football in the county. The degree to which it is explored is determined by the time and space constraints of this thesis. However, this section demonstrates that association football had spread further south in Ireland before 1880 than has been demonstrated previously.[59]

As with rugby football, it was the military personnel who were the instigators of the association code in Tipperary, at Cahir and Fethard garrisons – both staffed in 1879 by members of the 7th Hussars. Based on the military personnel assigned to the various barracks in the county, there is little scope for inferring a favoured ball game amongst the men stationed there. The Hussars at Cahir and the infantry at Tipperary played the association game in 1875. A report of a match between the 7th Hussars (Cahir barracks) and the 15th Regiment (Tipperary) noted that the 'dribbling (that essential feature of the association game) of Corporals Murray, Urquhart' was a feature of the day's play.[60] Though specifics of the play itself are ambiguous, the reference to the 'association game' infers that it was the code sanctioned by the Football Association in 1863 which was played. Conversely, the style of the report leaves it open to the interpretation that the author was constructing an analogy to indicate that the game being played was like the association game. Be that as it may, in a

[58] In his study of the association game in Ireland, Neal Garnham notes, in poetic form in the preface, that 'Much has been written about the history of football, although the game in Ireland remains somewhat aloof. No great chronicler, or even studious amateur, has given the game its deserved memorial.' Garnham. *Association football*, preface.
[59] Dublin and Belfast were seen as the central areas for the initial growth of the association game. Garnham. *Association football*, pp 4-7.
[60] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 26 Nov. 1879.

report of a subsequent match between Cahir and Fethard, references to a goalkeeper and other characteristics not associated with the rugby code are made, from which one can infer that it was the association code which was being played.[61] Further south in the county, a notice appeared in the local press in 1880 which announced a meeting to establish the Kilcash Football Club, which would play under association rules.[62] In 1879, the Carrick-on-Suir Amateur Athletic, Cricket and Football Club had been established, as indicated in Chapter Five. The football code which these clubs followed was the association code. The Carrick and Kilcash clubs played each other during the winter of 1879-80, with Tom Davin noted for his display as goalkeeper for the Carrick team.[63] It was to be a short-lived experience. Apart from one reference to a four-a-side football tournament, played in association with the athletic sports on Easter Monday 1882, when Carrick played against a Kilcash quartet, there were no further references to football in the club minutes.[64] The collapse of the Carrick-on-Suir athletic club later that year put an end to any likelihood for sustained promotion of the association game though, once again, one is relying on local press reports as the basis for judgements on the further diffusion of the game.

After the foundation of the GAA the association code remained largely absent from Tipperary. There was a brief revival of interest in association football game in the latter half of the 1890s when the military were active in its promotion in the county.[65] However, though detailed consideration of this aspect would take us beyond the time-frame of this thesis, the evidence has shows that association football was being played in south Tipperary at a time when its progress has previously been demonstrated to have been centred on Belfast and, to

[61] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 20 Dec. 1879.
[62] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 10 Mar. 1880.
[63] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 1 May 1880.
[64] Minute book – Carrick-on-Suir athletic, cricket and football club. 'Committee meeting Monday 17th April 1882.
[65] *Clonmel Nationalist*, 21 April 1897. See also Garnham, *Origins and development of football in Ireland*, p. 18.

some extent, Dublin.[66] It emphasises the need for in-depth research of diffusion of the code at a micro-level to fully appreciate the extent to which the game had spread throughout Ireland in the years preceding and subsequent to the foundation of the GAA.

Cricket

This second section looks at ball games played with a stick or a bat. The two games assessed are cricket and hurling. Apart from hurling, cricket in county Tipperary is the only other ball game which has been researched, a work which I undertook in 2004.[67] The essence of this section is to explore the minutiae of the game not previously investigated. Crucial to this analysis is an exploration of the early participants to ascertain if there was any cross fertilisation of the game from England. It also identifies which teams were the most active. The degree to which there was regular interaction between specific teams, such as the military playing against civilians and schools versus civilians is also explored.[68] Though Thomas Hone, when stationed in Cahir barracks with the Hussars in 1879, played cricket and association football, it would be helpful to know if there was any diffusion across the various ball games among native Tipperary men. Did their appetite for sport mean that they were willing to play whatever game was laid before them and, in a sense, commence a local sporting identity?

When rugby union was introduced to Nenagh the military team played 'an equal number of the Nenagh Cricket Club'.[69] One of the members of Nenagh cricket team, William Chumney, who played many times for the club, subsequently lined out for the Ormond Rugby Club in

[66] Garnham. *Association football*, pp 4-7.
[67] Bracken. *Cricket in Co. Tipperary*.
[68] The term team is used here, rather than club. My previous research has indicated that many teams which were called cricket clubs were in fact more a collection of men which took the field on an irregular basis and their whole set up was largely ephemeral and of an *ad hoc* nature.
[69] *Nenagh Guardian*, 29 Dec. 1875.

the Munster Challenge Cup in 1886.[70] In Tipperary town, St. George McCarthy, the Heuston twins and W.G. Rutherford played cricket with Clanwilliam. They also played the union code with the Clanwilliam rugby club which, one may infer, started out as a cricket club, as in Nenagh.[71] There was a literary club in Tipperary town, called the Clanwilliam Club, reputedly established in 1866 with 'officers of the Army and Navy admitted without ballot'.[72] W.G. Rutherford, prominent on both the cricket and rugby field, was a member of this club.[73] Prior to this, in 1840, 'the bachelors of the Clanwilliam Club' gave a splendid ball and supper to the '*elite* (sic) of this and neighbouring counties'.[74] It is quite probable that it was from this club that all other clubs and activities evolved, as it was comprised of bachelors. These men had lots of time on their hands to engage in recreational sport and they were likely of a similar age. The club also had a strong military presence.

St. George McCarthy had an interesting and varied sporting career. Though recognised for his rugby prowess and his cricket playing ability he is, perhaps, best remembered as one of the seven men who were present when the GAA was founded in 1884. A member of the Royal Irish Constabulary, his presence at this historic meeting in Thurles, appears to be the only connection he had with the GAA in a public sphere. Whether he was there on police business, maintaining observations on Irish Republican Brotherhood activity is speculative, though not implausible.

[70] *Nenagh Guardian*, 16 Aug. 1876; *Tipperary People*, 1 Sept. 1876; *Tipperary Advocate*, 6 July 1878; *Nenagh Guardian*, 20 Feb. 1886.
[71] For Clanwilliam cricket see *Clonmel Chronicle* 27 July 1878; 30 July 1879; 12 June 1880, and for Clanwilliam rugby see *Clonmel Chronicle*, 14 Jan 1880; *Sport*, 22 Apr. 1882.
[72] Bassett. *Tipperary: a guide and directory 1889*, p. 241.
[73] Denis G. Marnane. *Clanwilliam football club 1879-1979 centenary history* (Tipperary, 1980), p. 11.
[74] *Tipperary Constitution*, 10 Jan. 1840.

Definitive evidence of cricket in Ireland dates from 1792 when the Garrison of Dublin played against an All Ireland team at the Phoenix Park, Dublin.[75] Accounts of other matches around the country, appearing on an irregular basis, are indicative of cricket awareness. In the 1820s cricket started to emerge, but in the seemingly unlikely rural locations of Ballinasloe, Co. Galway in 1825, and at Norelands, Co. Kilkenny in 1829.[76] The game enjoyed the patronage of the local elite and, in the case of the Kilkenny team, it was William Bayly who provided it. These teams met again in June 1831, at Norelands, Co. Kilkenny. The Marquis of Ormonde, who resided at Kilkenny Castle, appeared in the home selection.[77]

Samuel Barton, Grove, Fethard was on the cricket eleven at Harrow in 1835, the year he left the school.[78] One of the earliest cricket matches in which the participation of a Tipperary-based team was recorded took place in August 1836. A 'Barton' was on the team and though no forename or initial was given, one could tentatively infer that this was Samuel.[79] S. Barton and later Samuel Barton participated in cricket matches with teams carrying the name of Cahir CC in 1846 and Clonmel CC in 1849.[80] In 1851, when the Clonmel club challenged a military team selected from the officers and privates at the town garrison to a cricket match, there appeared on the Clonmel team Samuel Barton, as well as William Palliser and Wray Palliser. Both Pallisers had attended Rugby school in 1845 and 1847 respectively.[81] The evidence relating to these boys suggests that they had become aware of cricket while at school and were now playing on the cricket fields of Tipperary. At Rugby School 'the majority of its pupils came from the upper middle classes, especially the clergy and the rural

[75] *Freeman's Journal*, 9 Aug. 1792; 11 Aug. 1792.
[76] *Kilkenny Moderator*, 12 Aug. 1829.
[77] *Kilkenny Moderator*, 11 June 1831.
[78] *Harrow school register*, p. 133.
[79] *Tipperary Constitution*, 5 Aug. 1836.
[80] *Tipperary Free Press*, 20 June 1846; *Tipperary Vindicator*, 19 May 1849.
[81] *Rugby school register: Volume I from 1675-1849 inclusive* (Rugby, 1881), pp 156, 267.

gentry'.[82] That some families in Ireland sent their sons to public school in England should not come as any great surprise (Figure 25). The Palliser family had a tradition of sending boys to public school in England. Wray's father had attended Harrow School in 1801, leaving there in 1805.[83] Yet, while Rugby School became synonymous with the rugby union football code, there is no evidence to suggest that the Palliser's brought this game back with them, mindful that the game as played in the school, in the 1840s, was still somewhat in its infancy. Given the implied patronage which underpinned the growth of cricket, it was still a cross class game in a way that other sports were not. This was a key element in the growth of country house cricket.

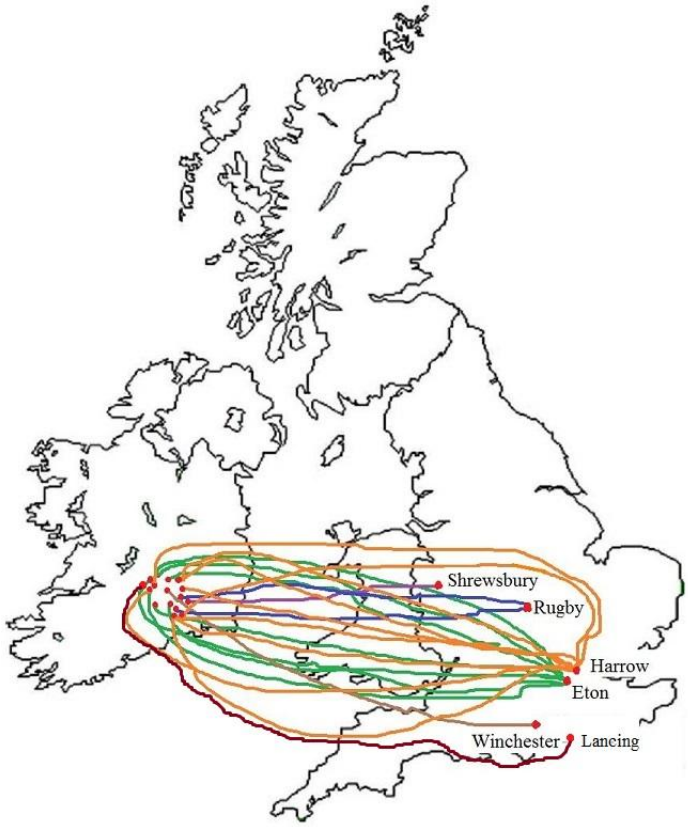

Figure 25: Tipperary boys attending public school in England, 1840-1880 (sample number 21)
● Red dot denotes one location in Tipperary and one school in England

[82] Collins. *English rugby union*, p. 5.
[83] *Harrow school register*, p. 16.

Sean Reid has observed that the 'Golden Age' of cricket in Ireland, based on his analysis of the John Lawrence Handbooks of Cricket in Ireland peaked in the early 1870s with the game going into a decline during the latter half of that same decade.[84] From 1840 to 1880, 207 different cricket teams from within Tipperary have been identified, though it must be emphasised, the majority of these were casual teams without club committee or constitution, let alone their own grounds. It has also been possible, using the local and national press and the John Lawrence *Handbook of Cricket in Ireland* annuals, to establish that at least 918 cricket matches were played in this period which involved at least one Tipperary based team (Figure 26). This number is not wholly representative of the level of cricket playing during this time. An analysis of matches recorded in the Lawrence handbooks, when cross-checked with the Irish press for the relevant dates, suggests that much cricket went unrecorded in local newspapers. It can be thus be inferred that cricket in Ireland was under-recorded generally and, indeed, that many local games went unnoticed. It has been further argued that the inclusion of the word 'cricket' nineteenth-century Irish language dictionaries reflected the extent to which the game was a common feature of the Irish landscape at that time.[85]

[84] Sean Reid. '*Ireland's Wisden: the handbook of cricket in Ireland and the golden age of Irish cricket 1865-1885'. MA dissertation,* University of Bristol, 2006.
[85] Mike Cronin and Brian Ó Conchubair. 'Ní cothram na féinne é sin: cricket, lexicography and cultural purity in Ireland' in *Journal of Historical Sociology*. Vo. 24, No. 4 (December, 2011), p. 496.

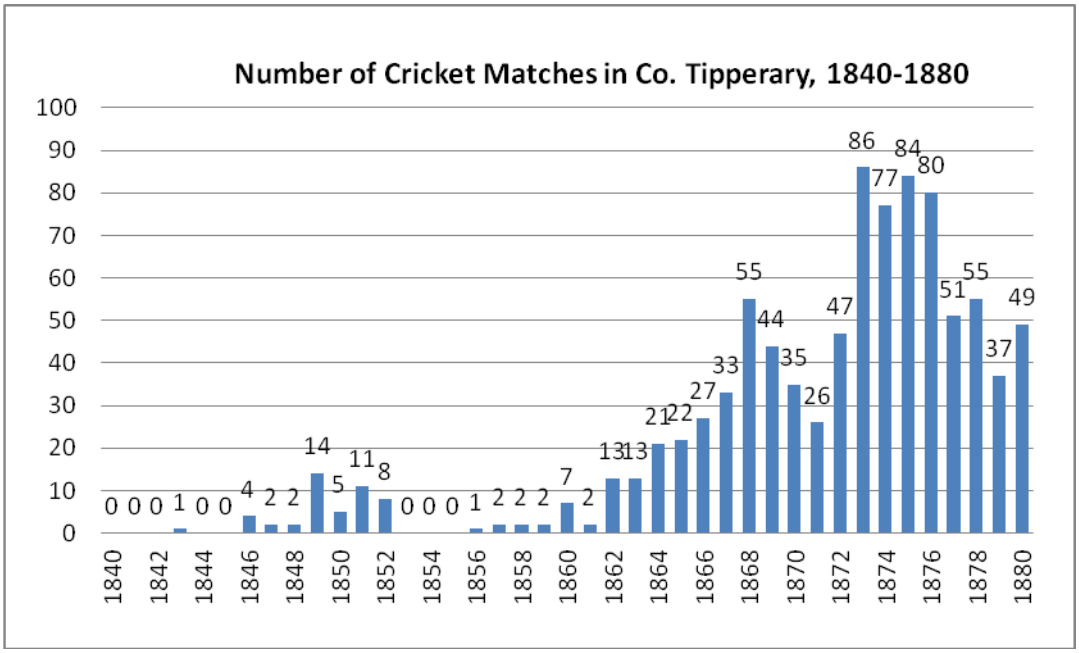

Figure 26: Cricket matches in Co. Tipperary, 1840-1880 (Total = 918)

In the post-Famine era cricket developed around the larger towns. One thing which most of these towns had in common was the presence of a military barracks. These same military barracks were a key element in the growth and spread of cricket in Tipperary. Be it a cavalry barracks, as at Cahir, or infantry barracks as at Clonmel, Templemore or Nenagh, cricket soon became a key element in the recreational activities of the officers and privates. Indeed, in 1840, a note in the *Tipperary Free Press* indicated that the Board of Ordnance had directed that cricket pitches were to be laid down in Cahir, Fethard and Templemore for the use of troops.[86] An important element here is the point of origin. Any familiarity which local men had with the game through their schooling does not seem to have been a factor in the growth of the game. It appears that these men were unable to organise a team network. The garrisons were the key agents in making this happen. The ability to organise a team network then diffused into the local communities, especially those in close proximity to a military barracks.

[86] *Tipperary Free Press*, 22 Apr. 1840.

The growth of the game in Tipperary was also greatly advanced by the development of the railway network. This helped to bring the game to those rural locations which were in close proximity to a railway station. New rail stations at Templemore, Thurles, Clonmel, Nenagh, Cahir and Dundrum greatly facilitated the movement of teams, with Dundrum a favoured location for many contests in the 1860s. The schools also advanced the game, none more so than three of the leading boarding schools in Tipperary. These were Rockwell College under the auspices of the Jesuit Fathers, Tipperary Grammar School, also known as The Abbey, primarily a Protestant boarding school, though aspiring middle-class Catholics also sent their sons there, and St. John's College, Newport.

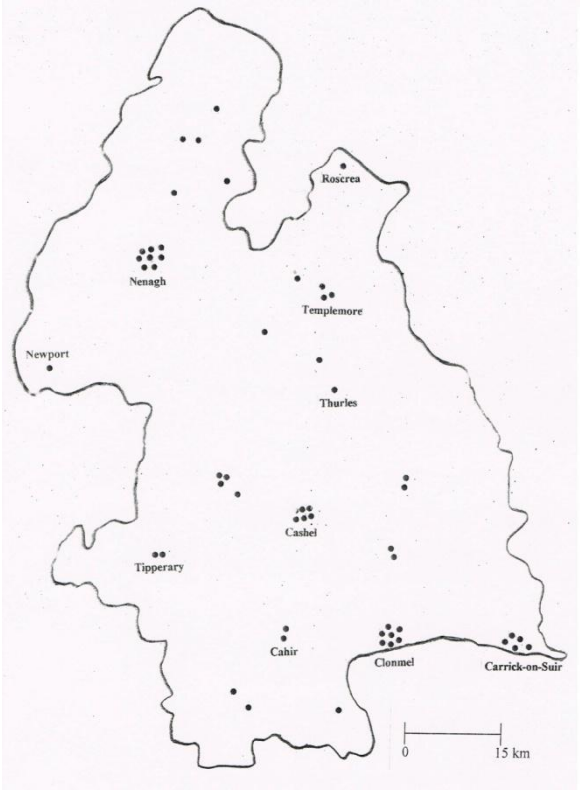

Figure 27: Cricket teams, 1834-1869
● = 1 team

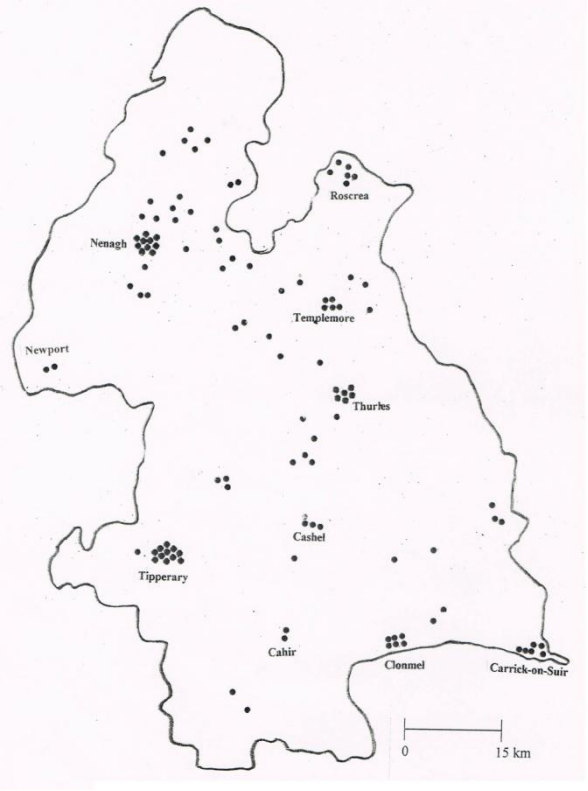

Figure 28: Cricket teams, 1870-1880
● = 1 team

From 1840 to the end of 1880 cricket in Tipperary was unrivalled as a field sport (Figures 27 and 28). The geography of the game was such that, by the end of this forty-year period, it had spread countywide, though the contemporary press reports suggest that the upland area around Kilcommon, in west Tipperary, was somewhat immune to the game.

During the 1870s, military, school, and gentlemens' teams actively played cricket. The prevalence of ephemeral rural clubs at this time suggests that, such was the level of exposure to cricket, that the laws of the game were greatly understood by many and that equipment and playing fields were also readily available. The degree to which this occurred may be gauged from the number of people who were members of the Nenagh CC. In the records viewed, there was no reference to a third or fourth team at this club. Mention of a second eleven was a rare occurrence throughout the whole thesis period. In 1876, Nenagh Cricket Club had 250 members, but only one team. The majority of the club were non-playing members.[87] Moreover, the model of the game in Tipperary mirrored that in England. It was essentially a rural game, one which fitted into pre-industrial working practices.

For County Tipperary, between 1840 and 1880, Inclusive of two-day matches, of which only fourteen in total were identified for this study, it has been possible to establish that at least 932 days when cricket was played. Of these days, it has been possible to identify the specific day on which cricket was played for 808 of them (Figure 29). An analysis of the day of play demonstrates that certain restrictions applied to the military and school teams but not to others. For instance, Rockwell College and Tipperary Grammar School never played on a Sunday and neither did any of the military teams, whereas many of the local townland and social teams did. For many of the rural and urban clubs the weekend was the most popular

[87] *Freeman's Journal*, 10 Oct. 1876, p. 8.

time for playing cricket, with Saturday the favoured day. From the middle of the 1870s onwards, Sunday was also quite popular. Of the eighty-six Sundays identified, seventy-eight of them were from the 1874-1880 period. The fact that Sunday playing was prominent demonstrated that many clubs were drawn from men of a Roman Catholic persuasion. It also suggests that Sabbath observance in regard to the playing of sport was less of an issue by the late 1860s and early 1870s than it had been in the 1850s when many men and boys were brought before the magistrates for playing hurling and football. Early evidence of cricket played on a Sunday occurred in the south of the county with the Carrick on Suir and Clonmel Commercial clubs meeting in 1864.[88]

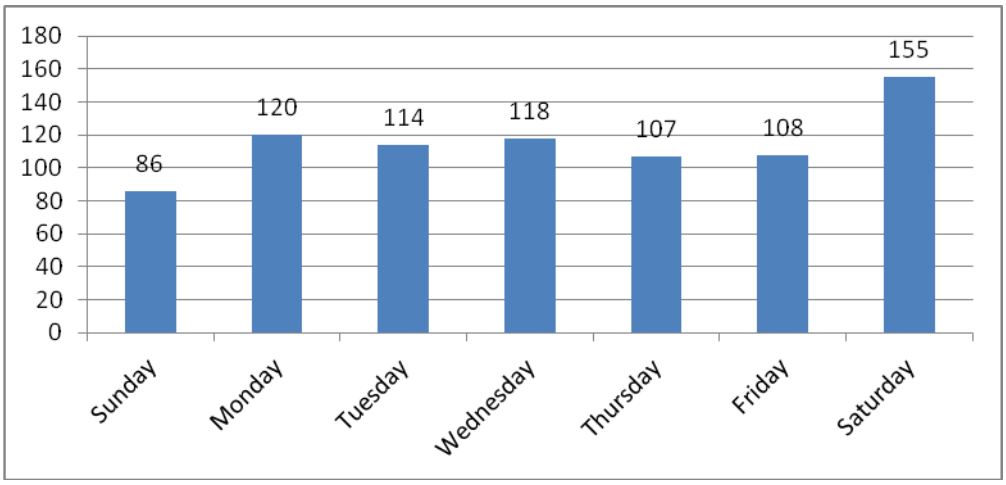

Figure 29: Day of the week for cricket playing in Co. Tipperary, 1840-1880 (Total = 808)

Evidence from the press reports suggest that there was no set time for matches to start. Matches commenced at eleven o'clock in the morning, at noon or in the early afternoon. They finished at around seven o'clock in the evening which allowed for travel home by horse-drawn carriage.[89] The data derived from the match reports indicates the following.

[88] *Tipperary Free Press*, 16 Aug. 1864.
[89] *Cashel Gazette*, 15 Aug. 1874. *Tipperary Advocate*, 23 June 1877; 4 Aug. 1877. *Nenagh Guardian*, 18 Aug. 1877.

Cricket growth in the post-Famine years supports Garnham's assessment that the 'aftermath of the Great Famine allowed cricket to supplant native pastimes that had fallen into decline'.[90] Throughout Tipperary every day of the week was popular for cricket though some were more so than others. Saturday, as noted, was the most favoured day, with 155 matches featuring on this day. The months when it was most popular are shown in Figure 30.

Of those playing cricket, over the period of this thesis, the military were involved in 221 (24.07%) of the matches. These were military teams playing against each other on a home and away basis - for instance Templemore barracks against Nenagh barracks, and similarly Cahir barracks versus Clonmel barracks. At a larger barracks, as at Clonmel, two separate regiments or infantry units garrisoned there competed against each other. It was principally the military teams which were prepared to travel to fulfil fixtures. They were regularly on the road when it came to Saturday matches. Military members also supplemented the playing elevens of local town or gentlemens' teams. This was especially noticeable in the team selections, where a fixture against a stronger team deemed it necessary that the best players in the locality played.

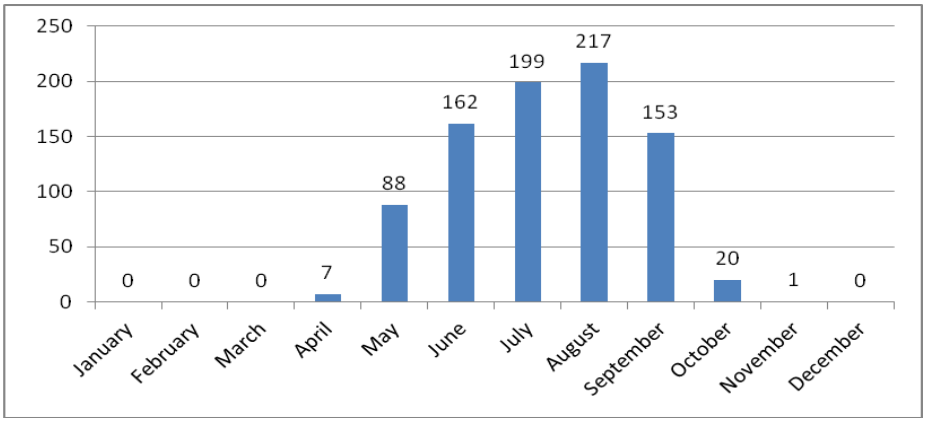

Figure 30: Cricket playing by month in Co. Tipperary, 1840-1880 (Total = 847)

[90] Neal Garnham. 'The roles of cricket in Victorian and Edwardian Ireland' in *Sporting Traditions*, Vol. 9, No. 2. (May 2003), p. 27.

It was not just grown men who played cricket. Some schools within Tipperary and in the neighbouring counties were prominent cricket locations. Grouped together the school teams were represented in 179 (19.5%) of all matches played. As previously mentioned, Tipperary Grammar school and Rockwell College were to the fore in this regard. Tipperary Grammar School participated in 97 matches (10.57%), while Rockwell College featured in 29 matches (3.16%). The data compiled does suggest that neither Tuesday nor Friday were greatly favoured by either school. This is not wholly conclusive with the Grammar school owing to the large number of unknown match days – this data was derived from reports in the Lawrence Handbooks which were not found in a subsequent re-examination of the local press. What was most interesting was that both school teams frequently played the same leading military and local club teams, yet, despite being only twenty-five miles apart, they never competed against each other, based on the evidence of this study. This suggests that there were local and probably religious factors at play which explain this non-occurrence. A specific reason, if one existed, has not been identified.

Gentlemens' teams were also a popular feature on the Tipperary cricket circuit. This type of team featured in seventy-two matches (7.84%). These teams might represent a local estates, a local business or be selected by a local landowner or a military officer. The reports analysed do not give any indication if gambling was associated with matches involving gentlemens' teams though one could reasonably assume that at some stage it did arise. All days were all popular for cricket but Sunday was frowned upon for recreational purposes with this type of team. Again, somewhat similar to the military, the teams of gentlemen visited other clubs more often than playing at home, where there may not have been a cricket pitch

There was also great mobility especially those clubs close to the rail network. There are 221 matches recorded (24.07%) which include the participation of a team from outside the county. Teams from all of the eight counties which border Tipperary as well as from Dublin took part. Teams from military barracks especially in Cork, Limerick and Offaly were also regular opponents for various Tipperary teams.

There is another key element to the growth of cricket in Ireland – that of the paid player.[91] Ashbrook Union CC, Durrow, Co. Laois competed against the Templemore garrison team on four occasions in the years 1847 and 1848. The Ashbrook Union team was centred on the Viscount Ashbrook's estate. The rules and regulations for the season 1847 show that the club members were required to pay 'one shilling for every match they are on the losing side' and 'one shilling and sixpence, including a luncheon of cold meat for each practice day'.[92] The members were also expected to pay five shillings for each match in which they played, in addition to their additional subscription. This stipulation indicated that cricket, at this time and at this club, was above the reach of the ordinary man and was a sport which was only open to those who could afford it. However, a further clause named five men who were 'chosen as players of the club' for the 1847 season. They were 'paid two shillings each for practice days, and the same per day for matches against other clubs and their expenses'.[93]

While it cannot be proved that similar payment arrangements existed with clubs in Tipperary, one can confidently assume that such occurrences did take place. It was paid employment and a means by which a man could remain in a locality if he displayed ability with the bat and ball, skills which might be of great use to his employer. As such, these men were among the

[91] The term player is used here instead of professional. The skill level or ability of specific players cannot be quantified, and neither can it be proved that this was one's sole income.
[92] Ashbrook Union cricket club score book 1846-1849. 'Rules and regulations for the season 1847,' no. 3.
[93] Ashbrook Union cricket club score book 1846-1849. 'Rules and regulations for the season 1847,' no. 5.

first paid sportsmen in rural Ireland. This payment of players, coming as it did in the middle of the Famine years, does not appear to have been a burden on the Ashbrook estate. It followed eighteenth-century trends in England, where skilful cricket players were retained as employees on estates, whether it was as a gardener or a groom. In other instances, a local man might show some promise with a team, and then be recruited by a willing patron who was anxious to build successful team of his own. Consequently, he was employed for various tasks, one of which was to play cricket.[94] Though cricket in the 1870s had become widespread, and even communal in nature, its formative years relied heavily on patronage. In this respect, it was no different to the patronage offered to it in England. It was this, more than anything, which underpinned the growth of cricket in Tipperary and the rest of rural Ireland.

Comparative analysis with cricket in Westmeath shows some divergent results. While there were seventeen matches recorded in Westmeath in the 1850s, and thirty-one in Tipperary for the same period, the returns for 1860-1879 are different.[95] In that period there were 315 matches recorded for Westmeath, while 815 were recorded for Tipperary, of which 578 took place in the 1870s.[96] A sharp decline in cricket playing had taken place in Westmeath due principally to the removal of key personnel from the county and ultimately clubs collapsed in their absence (Figure 31). In Tipperary the game was played principally by clerical officers and tenant farmers who regularly found opposition in the form of the military cricket team.

[94] Underdown. *Start of play*, pp 69-72.
[95] Hunt. 'The development of sport in County Westmeath,' p. 183.
[96] Hunt. 'The development of sport in County Westmeath,' p. 184.

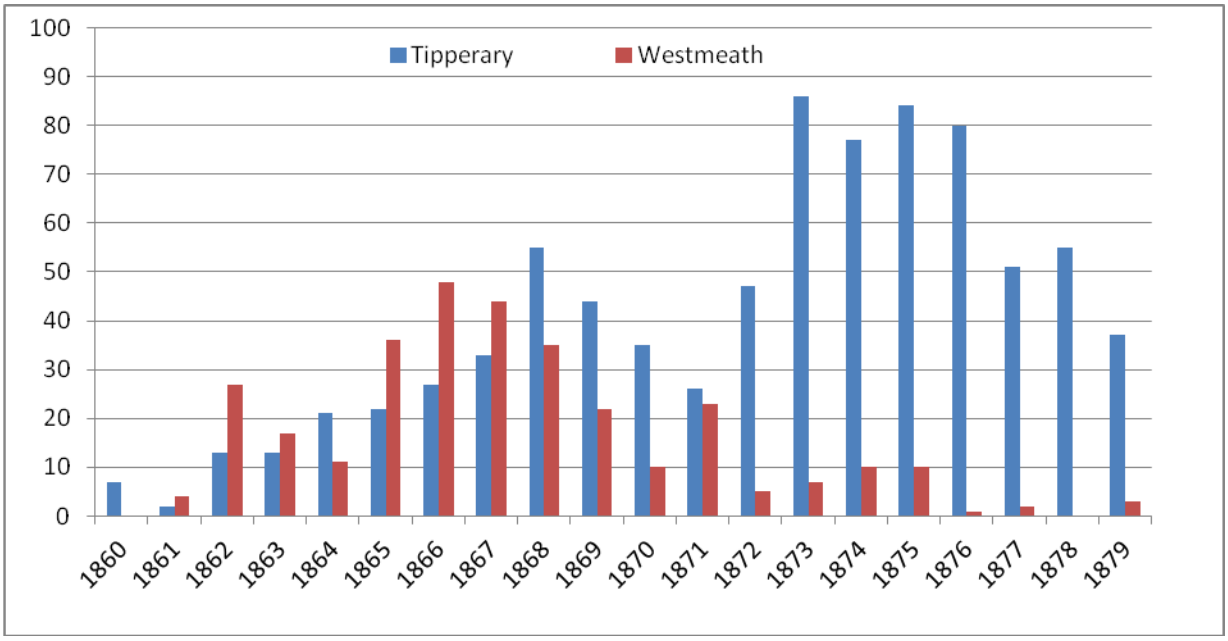

Figure 31: Cricket matches recorded in Counties Tipperary and Westmeath, 1860 - 1879. Tipperary total = 815; Westmeath total = 315. (Source: Westmeath data: Hunt. 'The development of sport in Co. Westmeath'.)[97]

This section has explored the extent to which cricket spread in Tipperary and the degree to which it became popular among the classes. It has shown, more than anything, that it was the military personnel who were the main exponents of the game rather than the schools, important though they were. The onset of the land wars and the foundation of the GAA saw its niche as a key summer sport decline and ultimately fade away in the early years of the twentieth century.

Hurling

This second section of stick and ball games looks at the evidence for the unique Irish sport of hurling. As has been previously noted, the ruling body for hurling, the GAA, was founded in 1884. Pre-1884 references to hurling in Ireland are not as apparent as those of cricket. Writing in the Spring 1993 issue of *History Ireland*, Kevin Whelan noted that 'by the mid

[97] Hunt. 'The development of sport in County Westmeath,' p. 184.

nineteenth century hurling had declined so steeply that it survived in three pockets, around Cork city, in south-east Galway and in the area north of Wexford town'.[98] In an important celebratory series of essays commemorating the 125th anniversary of the GAA, the closing lines of an essay on 'Football and hurling in early modern Ireland,' on the face of it, appears not to have taken into consideration the potential evidence as highlighted by De Búrca, Puirséal and Ó Caithnia. Rather, Eoin Kinsella comments that 'the devastation of the famine appears to have led to the near extinction of hurling except for a few pockets of the country, notably Galway, Wexford and Dublin'.[99] Two of the three areas mentioned mirror those of Whelan, but in the third instance Dublin replaces Cork. This section demonstrates that hurling was far more widespread, both in Tipperary and Ireland, and the thesis extends to embrace pre-1884 hurling in Australia to illustrate this point even further.

As to the reliability of the contemporary data on hurling was, opinions may differ, and in terms of local newspaper coverage it was likely that it was subject to bias and unhelpful inferences. A case in point here is supplied by two contemporary reports from County Tipperary, both from the summer of 1873, which while outlining the beneficial and expanding growth of cricket, suggest two different interpretations in relation to hurling. The nationalist *Tipperary Free Press*, in a commentary about the South Tipperary Cricket Club, noted that 'in no other country – not even excepting England – are athletic sports so universally practised and enthusiastically enjoyed as in this'.[100] The article continues, that

> no walk of life in this country – be it the most humble or most exalted – is without its games – where 'feats of skill and strength" call forth all the energetic vigor (*sic*) of the human frame – the lowly pleasant (*sic*) boy, after his week of weary toil, bounds with enthusiasm as he joins his party of a Sunday afternoon to play a match of

[98] Kevin Whelan. 'The geography of hurling' in *History Ireland*. Vol. 1 No. 1, Spring 1993, p. 28.
[99] Eoin Kinsella. 'Riotous proceedings and the cricket of savages: football and hurling in early modern Ireland' in M. Cronin, W. Murphy and P. Rouse. *The Gaelic athletic association 1884-2009*. (Dublin, 2009), p. 30.
[100] *Tipperary Free Press*, 2 May 1873.

> "hurling"….In no county in Ireland is the love of athletic amusement so cherished as in Tipperary.

Though brief, the reference to the 'peasant boy' heading off on a Sunday to play hurling suggests that in south Tipperary the sport was still played even if the local press did not record any regular accounts of it. The likelihood is that hurling was, like cricket, a local sporting activity with nothing at stake but honour. In contrast, after reading an article from the Unionist *Nenagh Guardian*, based in north Tipperary, only three months later, one could be forgiven for believing that hurling was actually well and truly buried. Entitled 'Hurling *versus* Cricket', the Guardian looked to what hurling had meant to people in the past and set this against the contemporary appeal of cricket. The article commenced

> the English game of cricket is now very much in vogue in Ireland. It has completely displaced the old Athletic exercise of Hurling, so prevalent some years ago. Hurling is almost unknown to the rising generation...But Hurling is now numbered among the amusements of the past....[101]

As Mike Huggins has argued 'it is worth exploring the interaction between the proliferation of sports journalism and its readers'. This is very much a case in point in relation to these two articles in the local press. Huggins noted that 'most sports journalists were themselves middle class and their role in constructing, disseminating and mediating in ideological discourse related to the construction of sporting identity'.[102] One can clearly see in these two contemporary accounts that, even within the geographical area of Tipperary, there were issues around how sport was reported. From the documentary evidence there is no doubt that cricket was the most popular team sport in Tipperary in the 1870s. Both accounts highlight the growing popularity of cricket, but they are clearly at odds in relation to the state of hurling.

[101] *Nenagh Guardian*, 23 July 1873.
[102] Mike Huggins. 'Second-class citizens? English middle-class culture and sport, 1850-1910: a reconsideration' in *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, Vol. 17, No. 1. (March 2000), p. 28.

However, the impulses that had driven both sports in the eighteenth century – hurling in Ireland and cricket in England - were similar. Both relied on patronage, both were closely linked with gambling, and both were rural based. In the mid-1870s the patronage link was absent from hurling. By that time cricket was so well established that it did not require patronage. Based on these two press reports, as far as hurling was concerned, one could argue that hurling was still played in south Tipperary but that it had died out in the north of the county.

As has been demonstrated with football, the issue of space and the places where hurling was played are important in understanding its alleged decline in the nineteenth century and the extent to which regulation impeded its growth. One reason for this was nineteenth century legislation, which restricted space and the areas available for play or recreation, especially amongst the lower classes.[103] Hurling, involving whatever number of participants, required a lot of space to play the game. Certain restrictions applied to sport played on private land, commonage or the public highway. Where private land or commonage was not available, control of the public highways had a serious impact on the playing of sports and games, especially for the juvenile members of communities. The constabulary were vigilant and where offences occurred, it was customary that the offenders appeared before the local Petty Sessions court. Such was the fate of William Cormack, Templemore, who appeared before the local court on 12 May 1852, having received a summons from Head Constable, George Patterson, for playing hurling on the street. If the restrictions on play were not specifically saying so, the way in which they were enforced demonstrated that the authorities were determined to undermine the ability of the lower classes to meet for recreation, especially in public areas. Local constables maintained a watchful eye on happenings in their jurisdiction.

[103] *1849 (45) Offences. (Ireland) A bill for the more speedy trail and punishment of offences in Ireland. Highways (Ireland) 1853, a bill to consolidate and amend the laws relating to highways in Ireland*.

In the aftermath of the famine years, the various Tipperary newspapers from throughout the county do refer to hurling from time to time though these references mostly relate to Petty Sessions appearances for trespass or hurling on a Sunday. It is in the Petty Sessions records that new evidence for hurling in this period is found. Forty-three men from the communities around Fethard appeared before the local Petty Sessions court in 1854 charged with playing hurling on a Sunday or committing trespass while playing the game.[104] It will never be known how many more instances such as these took place. It is likely that some groups of men and boys may have been hunted away and told not to come back, that others absconded when they saw the constabulary arrive, while some may have been allowed to play. Similarly, near Bansha, in 1856, fourteen men were arrested, once again on a Sunday and, unusually, their occupations were given on the Petty Sessions records. Two farmers and twelve labourers were each fined sixpence.[105] The evidence also shows that from 1842 to 1880 Sunday play was a feature of hurling at a time when sport on this day in Great Britain was still prohibited.[106] Hurling on other days did not come under this law and so it went unnoticed unless there was an unsavoury incident which resulted in an appearance of someone before the courts. It also demonstrated that long before the GAA was founded Sunday play was popular, primarily because it was the one day which was free from work. As has been shown, a similar trend also emerged with cricket matches from the mid-1870s.

Using the data collected for this thesis the following graph shows the time of year when hurling took place in Tipperary between 1840 and 1880 (Figure 32). January featured strongly, with play in all months except for July and September (though based on a small numerical sample of just sixty-three days). It appears that a shift had taken place in relation to

[104] Fethard, Court Service: Petty Sessions Order Book. 1/5413, No. 292-310, 26 June 1854.
[105] Bansha, Court Service: Petty Sessions Order Book. 1/9265, No. 5-18, 14 January 1856.
[106] Wray Vamplew. *Pay up and play the game: professional sport in Britain 1875-1914.* (Cambridge, 1988), p. 54.

the hurling calendar when compared to the eighteenth century.

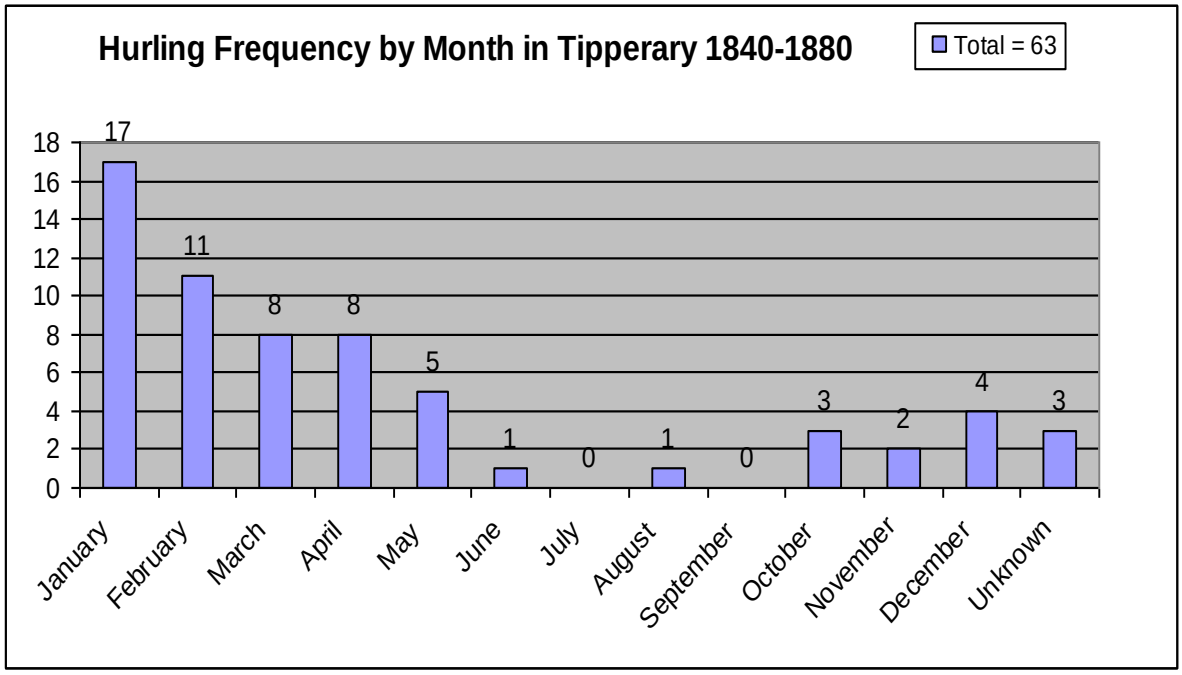

Figure 32: Hurling frequency by month in Co. Tipperary, 1840-1880

Between 1740 and 1793 'hurling was essentially a later summer game' with sixty-seven per cent of matches recorded taking place in July, August and September. This represented thirty-three games out of a sample number of forty-nine.[107] When compared with the analysis of James Kelly for the eighteenth century, Sunday clearly remained the favoured day for hurling, though Kelly did find that Monday and Thursday were also popular (See Figure 33).[108] However, the data suggests that a switch to winter play had taken place which was indicative of the absence of the elite as patrons of hurling in the Victorian period. Hurling matches on private land were progressively denied to the players and the game was pushed out onto the streets and roadways where it was played in a very informal and unscheduled manner. Quite often it was children who were prosecuted for playing hurling on the roadway. In Clonmel, in 1852, at the Mayor's Court the practice of hurling in the streets was described

[107] Kelly. *Sport in Ireland*, p. 258.
[108] Kelly. *Sport in Ireland*, p. 259.

as ‘an intolerable nuisance and must be checked’.[109] Children playing on the streets were easy targets for the constabulary.

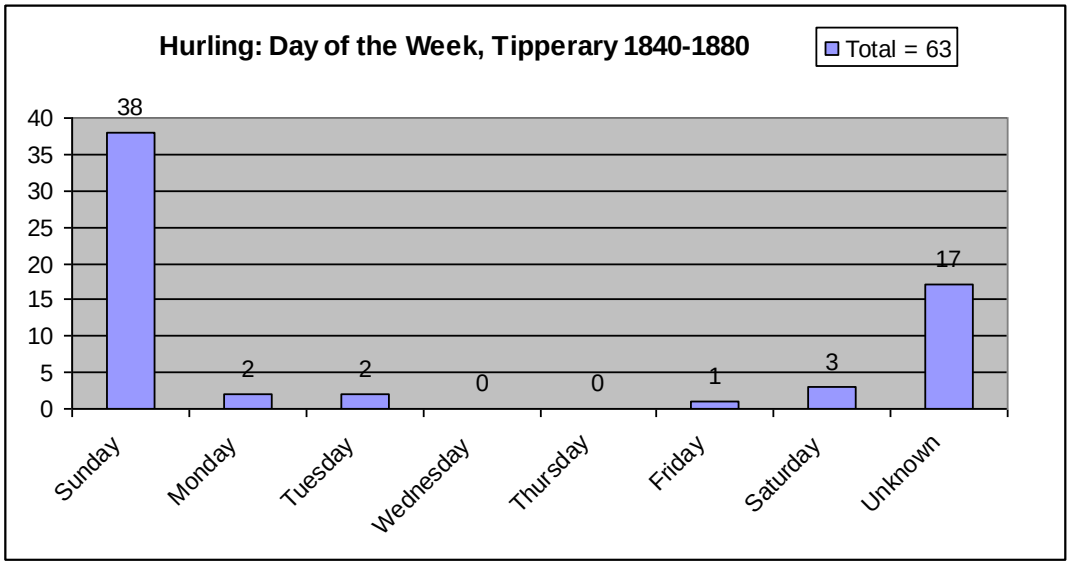

Figure 33: Day of the week for playing hurling in Co. Tipperary, 1840-1880

By the third quarter of the nineteenth century hurling was often unruly and prone to violence. Disagreements, for one reason or another, whether it was a dispute between factions, a comment passed during play or even over a girl, often led to a row on the field which frequently resulted in serious injury or death. The evidence from the press and official reports were in stark contrast to the writings of the correspondent to the *Nenagh Guardian*, in 1873, as previously documented. He had noted that although ‘scrimmages’ brought some of these hurling matches to an abrupt and unpleasant close; but still, on the whole, ‘they were, considering the circumstances, wonderfully free from anything seriously unpleasant’. This unfortunately, was often far from true. There are nine instances recorded where a player died as a result of malicious injuries received while hurling, seven instances of assault, and two of accidental death, which represented twenty-nine per cent of the total. This figure is consistent with that of eighteenth century hurling, where, over a period of almost fifty years,

[109] *Tipperary Free Press*, 23 May 1852.

'approximately 25 per cent ... gave rise to some riotous or violent activity.'[110] This demonstrated that hurling was a sport which retained an element of aggression, something which the Victorian sense of morality did not countenance.

Indeed, there is some evidence to suggest that personal animosity or family feuds were frequently the reason behind some of these disputes, with retribution for past slights or offence taken out on someone during play. In 1862, a man, allegedly heading for America, was arrested in Cobh, Co. Cork after fatally injuring another man at a match in Two-Mile-Borris.[111] In another instance in south Tipperary, in late January 1871, a dispute between two families owing to 'a case of trespass about a quarry' and a subsequent tender for the repair of a road, ultimately led to the death of Edmond St. John. He was a son of one of the parties involved and while at a match he received a blow of a hurley to his head.

Contrary to the belief among some GAA historians, this discussion has proved that there was much more hurling in the nineteenth century played in Tipperary than that which has previously been portrayed.[112] The evidence highlights the county as one area prominent in terms of the number of pre-1884 hurling references identified. But, as some observers and contemporary writers indicate, there is an acceptance that many of those men who played hurling actually emigrated in the post-Famine era. As Seamus King has noted, 'it is most likely that the Irish who arrived in such numbers into England in the post-Famine period brought the game of hurling with them. However, it is unlikely that the game was organised in any meaningful way until after the foundation of the GAA'.[113] Irish emigrants took hurling to Australia where the game was very much alive in the late 1870s. Between 1876 and 1884

[110] Kelly. *Sport in Ireland*, p. 246.
[111] *Irish Times*, 19 Dec. 1862.
[112] Stakelum. *Gaelic games in Holycross Ballycahill*, p. xi. Kinsella. 'Riotous proceedings,' pp 15-31.
[113] Seamus J. King. *The clash of the ash in foreign fields: hurling abroad* (Cashel, 1998), p. 42.

there were at least twenty-three teams in Australia, mostly in Victoria.[114] This led to the formation of the Victorian Hurling Club Association in April 1878.[115] If hurling was alive and well in Australia one can assume that it was alive and well in Ireland.

Ball Playing (Handball)

Ball courts were a feature of the Tipperary landscape throughout the nineteenth century, often tucked away behind buildings (see Figure 34). They were also found at military barracks, principally in Nenagh, Templemore and Tipperary.[116] Ball-playing was widespread in the county with some leading exponents of the game originating from Clonmel. This third section looks at the patronage of this game and the degree to which patrons used it as a means to indulge their appetite for gambling.

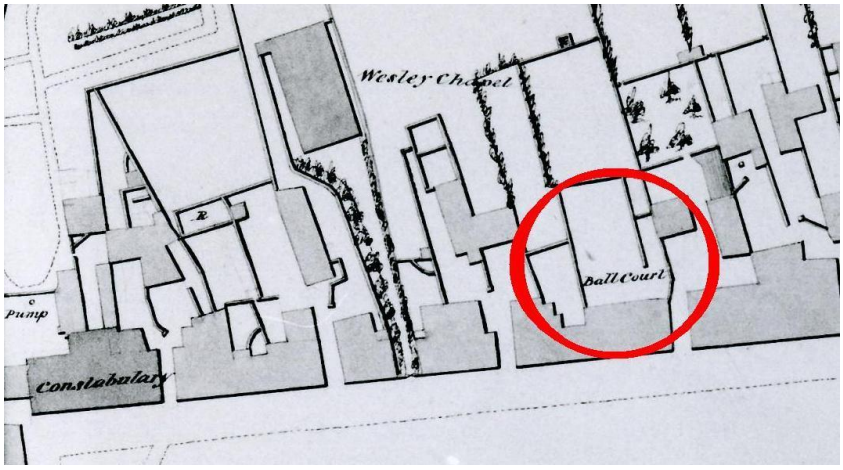

Figure 34: Detail of ball court to the rear of Main Street, Templemore, 1840 (Ordnance Survey)

As had happened with both hurling and football, boys and men who were found 'ball playing' on the public streets were brought before the local magistrates. One has to acknowledge that

[114] This is based on research conducted by this writer of contemporary Australian newspapers.
[115] *The Argus*, 17 Apr. 1878, p. 5.
[116] Military Archives, Dublin. Detail of skittle alley and fives-court at Tipperary barracks, c.1876 (IE/MA/MPD/AD119275-006). Detail of ball courts at Templemore Barracks, c.1873. (Templemore Barracks WO78-2870)

an activity like this constituted an offence and was contrary to the law of the land. Therefore, the local constabulary had little option but to enforce the law as they saw fit.[117] In June 1857, six men were charged before the Clonmel Petty Sessions for playing ball on the public street, an instance which was not reported in the local press.[118] But where ball courts were erected, play could and did take place and most of it went unrecorded. Those recorded were games noteworthy for a couple of factors – namely the occasion itself and the degree to which open bets were offered and taken.

In 1850, two Clonmel men travelled to Limerick to compete against challengers from Cork City. The match was for '£50 aside, but several hundred pounds changed hands on the occasion,' leaving the Clonmel men to return home to a rapturous welcome.[119] A match of a more local nature, took place at the racket court in the County Clubhouse, Clonmel in 1858 for £10 aside, in which Jeremiah Condon, a Clonmel victualler, defeated James Kennedy, of Carrick-on-Suir.[120] Condon then teamed up with William Bagg to challenge any men from the south of Ireland for £50 aside. Ten years later they were still paired up together, this time to take on the Dublin champions C. Kickham and T. Waters, once more at the County Clubhouse, Clonmel, where 'as much as £1,000 was staked [on] the Clonmel boys, and *lost* (*sic*)'.[121] One reason attributed to the local men's defeat was that their ages were fifty-two and forty years, though it was not specified which was the older. It makes the claim that Bagg was the Irish professional champion from 1870 to 1880 all the more suspect.[122]

[117] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 3 June 1874.
[118] Clonmel, Court Service: Petty Sessions Order Book. 1/2852, No 221-226, 29 June 1857.
[119] *Tipperary Free Press*, 2 Oct. 1850.
[120] *Tipperary Free Press*, 21 Sept. 1858; *Tipperary Examiner*, 22 Sept. 1858.
[121] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 7 Sept. 1868.
[122] Tom McElligott. *Handball: the game, the players, the history*. (Dublin, 1984), p. 158.

Two more men from the south of the county, P. Griffin, Carrick-on-Suir, and Edward Hickey, Clonmel, battled it out for £50 aside at the ball alley in Kilkenny City in October 1872. As Griffin took control 'James Laurence and John O'Connell offered *fivers* and *tenners* (*sic*) freely out of the Carrick-man, but were not taken up'.[123] The *Clonmel Chronicle* report of this fixture noted it as a 'game of fives,' though this terminology was not widely used in Ireland. The main advocates for this term were the military and it was used to denote the 'skittle alley and fives-court' on the plans for Tipperary barracks. This suggests a diffusion of the sport among the military, something which also brought them into contact with civilian players.[124] At Nenagh a private in the 47th regiment defeated 'a civilian, who [was] one of the best players in this district' at the military barrack alley, where once more 'considerable stakes were laid on the issue'.[125]

Though relatively simple in concept the game still required appropriate premises to be viable. The racket court of the County Clubhouse was a popular venue, as has been noted. What is less clear is the degree to which local property owners actively supported the game by renting out an alley to a local entrepreneur. That such patronage was likely may be ascertained from the details of a court case at Clonmel Borough Petty Sessions in June 1876. Thomas Cleary, Ardgeeha, charged James Goold with overholding possession of the ball-alley in Peter Street (Figure 35). The rent due was three shillings per week, with £4 due to Cleary on account of non-payment by Goold.[126]

[123] *Tipperary Free Press*, 15 Oct. 1872; *Clonmel Chronicle*, 16 Oct. 1872.
[124] Detail of skittle alley and fives-court at Tipperary barracks, c.1876 (source: Military Archives IE/MA/MPD/AD119275-006).
[125] *Nenagh Guardian*, 2 Sept. 1871.
[126] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 14 June 1876.

Figure 35: Detail of ball court, Peter Street, Clonmel, 1874 (Source: Ordnance Survey Clonmel 1874, Sheet 15, scale 1:500)

Because of the permanence of ball alleys they can be traced on the Ordnance Survey maps of the period, an unusual feature of the Victorian landscape of Tipperary. Apart from Thurles racecourse, as previously noted, no other sporting feature attracted the attention of cartographers. Of the individuals who participated only one occupation, that of a victualler, has been identified. The physical nature of the game and the petty sessions offences recorded suggests that it was primarily played by ordinary men. That their place of sport, though small in terms of the space required, was recorded on maps was ironic when compared with the land and facilities required for other, more expensive sporting activities. It served to further illustrate the fluid nature of sport in Victorian Tipperary and the overall lack of structure and permanence associated with sport in general.

Conclusion

While sons of prosperous Tipperary residents attended public schools in England, there is no definitive evidence to suggest that they promoted the games cult in Ireland. The number of boys who did attend public school on the British mainland was small. There was insufficient critical mass to suggest the transfer of the games ethic to Ireland. Apart from the isolated Harrow rules football match in Clonmel, where a group of likeminded men met up for a game, the only other evidence which one may draw from the school records was that some of the young men played cricket upon their return to Tipperary. Both E. Waller and Fitzgibbon Trant attended Eton, in 1859 and 1865 respectively. Both featured on local cricket teams on their return to Tipperary but there is no evidence to confirm that they had played cricket at school.[127] John Bayly, from Debsborough in the north of the county, played in the Eton eleven in 1874.[128] He subsequently made two appearances for the Ireland team in 1884.[129] The family connection with cricket remained local when his father, John Bayly, was elected president of the Ormond CC in 1884.[130] The cult of athleticism did not happen in rural Tipperary, irrespective of how many boys received public school education in England or within Tipperary. There was neither sufficient sportsmen to support it nor an active promotion of athleticism either inside or outside the school system within the county. That sport was promoted in Tipperary Grammar School is without question. This could have had as much to do with muscular Christianity and character building as it did with athleticism.

Of the school network in Tipperary, those which featured prominently on the local cricket and rugby union fields in the county, comparable with the public school model in England, were the Tipperary Grammar School, St. John's College, Newport, and Rockwell College,

[127] H.E.C. Stapylton. *The Eton school lists from 1791 to 1877, with notes and index.* (Eton, 1884), pp 278, 314.
[128] Stapylton, *The Eton school lists*, p. 364.
[129] Edward Liddle. *Irish cricketers 1855-1980* (Cleethorpes, 1980), p. 23.
[130] *Nenagh Guardian*, 9 Apr. 1884.

though the latter was only associated with cricket. The 1871 census returns for Tipperary show that there were 12,493 boys aged between ten and fifteen years of age living in the county.[131] Attendance levels at post-primary school were low, as the majority of families could not afford to put their children through further education, let alone public or grammar schools. In England 'less than a quarter of one per cent' of boys that went to school went to a public school.[132] On account of this, many of the school cricket and rugby teams played against old boys, where it was deemed important to keep up the links with the school. Teams were regularly permutations of various associates and pupils of the school itself. These teams were often arbitrary but it was often the only course of action available, mindful that the summer holidays were a natural defining period for active school participation.

The attendance of a small number of boys at public school in England demonstrated that there was regular interaction between these educational establishments and families in Ireland. These were likely as a result of cultural ties, as some families in Tipperary identified themselves as belonging to the commonwealth of Great Britain and Ireland. They were also assisting in empire building. A diffusion of the games cult ethos from the public school network in England resulted in tangential dissemination of games between like-minded young males. But the attendance of these boys at public school in England was also reflective of class and snobbery. It was the same at the grammar schools in Tipperary. That the Tipperary Grammar School played rugby matches between themselves and school old boys suggests that this was not diffusion but rather 'social separatism played out on the playing field'.[133]

[131] *Census of Ireland for the year 1871: province of Munster: county Tipperary* (Dublin, 1872), p. 774.
[132] Collins. *English rugby union*, p. 9.
[133] Cronin. 'A chaotic reading of Irish history,' p. 2757.

The evidence suggests that diffusion with rugby came from the military officers in the same way as it did with association football. While there may be a case for athleticism taking place within the confines of the grammar schools, it is not backed up from the wider sporting environment of Tipperary. That young men played Harrow Rules football in south Tipperary was an accident of history rather than transmigration of sport. It was a football match played for sport's sake, nothing more and nothing less. The evidence from the cricket playing fraternity emphasised this all the more. The Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) was the *de facto* head body of cricket. Yet, there was no national organisational structure to oversee cricket's growth in Ireland. This undermined the continued development of the game. The very nature of the game as it developed in Tipperary was one which was diffused down through all classes. This resulted in many games taking place on a Sunday afternoon, a feature which would not have rested easily with the supporters of athleticism. With the foundation of the GAA in 1884 all primary ball sports in the country now had a national body to oversee their growth and development. All, that was, except cricket. It was one of the reasons for its decline in the opening years of the twentieth century. This study of ball games in county Tipperary has demonstrated that sport was diffused through the classes. This ranged from the landowner, clerk, and shop assistant with cricket, to the farm labourer with hurling. No other aspect of sport can claim to have such a diverse range of class association throughout the period of this thesis.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This conclusion brings together the key elements of this thesis discussing the evolution and growth of recreational sport in Co. Tipperary, 1840-1880. The thesis argues that the organisation of recreational sport was predicated along class lines. It argues that sport in mid-Victorian Tipperary was all about class. It was the landed, propertied and military classes who controlled, patronised and participated in sport in the county. The spread and participation level of sport, demonstrated a strong element of social exclusion. This was not by design. The individuals in question belonged to a narrow social class and operated within a confined network of relationships, and diffusion was no part of their agenda. It was by the nature of their close association and cultural ties that like minded individuals and families invited their friends, associates and visitors to their homes and demesnes for recreational sport. This maintained familial links and cultural ties in what was a predominantly rural society.

Recreational sport which took place in the demesnes and estates required an organisational structure, which would not have happened, were it not for patronage from above, that is from the landlord or lessee, or in the case of the military, the officer class. Structures put in place, under the direction of these men or their appointed officials, ensured that a calendar of events could take place for the successful completion of whatever sporting season was in vogue. Because the elite had time, social position and money, a variety of sports were organised and sustained. This was sport for the elite, organised by the elite. The diffusion of various sports emanated from the demesne and garrison out into the countryside.

The thesis has also demonstrates how the following factors were critical to the development and growth of sport in Tipperary during 1840-1880.

- The large scale presence of officers in Tipperary's numerous military barracks. Many of these officers were born outside Ireland and were already familiar with modern and codified forms of sport.
- The development of an integrated rail network covering most of the county that allowed for the cheap and easy construction of sporting networks.
- The post-Famine boom (and the end of the social and economic dislocation of the 1845-51 period), which created the societal stability that allowed recreational sport to prosper.
- The estate system that experienced a period of sustained economic certainty during this period, including new investment in landed estates.
- Cricket was described in the Tipperary press as 'a republican game,' that is a game which had truly spread countywide and was diffused among all the classes.
- Despite the often-held view that hurling had died out due to the effects of the Famine and its consequences, the game continued to be practiced widely although not in a readily recognised and codified form. The research here was able to employ the previously under-used Petty Sessions records as a source to identify sport, specifically hurling and football, at a micro-level.
- That the period saw the emergence of the first sports stars (such as Henry, 3rd Marquis of Waterford – Lord Waterford) who captivated the public at large.
- 1840-1880 witnessed the emergence of commercialized sporting journalism, with, for example, 'Larky Grigg' supplying weekly columns to the Tipperary press on hunting to hounds.

- For the first time in Irish history, female participation became widespread and recorded, during the period, notably in hunting to hounds, archery, croquet and lawn tennis.
- That there was a clearly defined take-off period for sport in the county in the mid-1860s, when there was a transition from occasional fixtures and contests to a more frequent 'calendar' of competition in a range of sports.
- That the period evidenced a steady growth in the business surrounding sport, including the employment of professionals (in a range of capacities and sports), such as the hiring of English trainers by the Clonmel Rowing Club, which demonstrated a winning mentality in the club, a club which was of recent foundation.

Throughout the thesis, each chapter explored themes and sporting types. Social and business interaction, conducted in the course of daily life, now found expression on the playing field, the cricket ground or the tennis court. The associational ties ran deep through society. The strong bond of friendship was a critical element in the world of the elite, frequently cultivated at public school. Working through local committees, this cohesive element which the elite brought to bear in the promotion and organisation of recreational sport was a crucial factor. There were four sports which retained a significant presence in the recreational activities of Tipperary throughout the whole period – hunting, horse racing, cricket and hurling, though the documentary evidence for the latter is not as substantial.

Close social networks resulted in some of the same family names appearing at various recreational sports, right through the period under review. Bagwell, Barton, Bassett Holmes, Carden, Charteris, Earl of Donoughmore, Going, Grubb, Langley, Viscount Lismore, Moore, Palliser, Perry, Smithwick, Trant, Trench and Lord Waterford, were names which typically

appeared at various recreations county-wide, though not all collectively together. While there were 1,706 owners of land of one acre and upwards in Tipperary in 1876, in terms of recreational sport the number of those at the fore of sporting promotion was much smaller.[1] Given that there were forty-four hunt packs; two hundred and seven cricket teams; seven archery societies; twenty-six horse racing venues, twenty-six athletics sport venues and twenty-nine lawn tennis venues, the total sum of 339 specific team or venue locations suggests a large number of men were required to support the growth of these sports.

The thesis has also comprehensively demonstrated that hurling had not died out in Tipperary, contrary to the opinions of recent scholars. The use of the petty sessions records have been used to verify the persistence of hurling at a micro-level. Further analysis of these records will undoubtedly provide more evidence of recreational sport among the ordinary people. While those involved may have been fined for playing on the street or on a Sunday, the importance of these references to the sporting history of Ireland cannot be emphasised enough. This new source allows a light to be cast on what before was hidden.

The impact and appeal, both from a social and sporting context, highlight Lord Waterford as the first sports superstar in the years preceding his untimely death in 1859. Chapters Three and Four specifically highlight the impact that he had on the hunting community and the horse racing fraternity. Money was no object, as he satisfied his passion for racing, buying and selling racehorses to improve his stud. With a large selection of horses available, he was ahead of his time in establishing a racing stud, which, but for his death, may have earned him even greater significance in the sporting annals of Tipperary and Waterford.

[1] *Return of owners of land*, p.172.

While the Great Famine had a devastating effect on society, recreational sports such as hunting to hounds, horse racing and cricket continued. Fox hunting and horse racing were, by then, integral elements in the social and recreational activities of a class that was able to maintain its standard of living. Having fulfilled their moral obligations by contributing to funds dedicated to alleviating distress caused by the Famine, life could – and for the most part did – continue as normal for the patrons of Irish sport.

It was with hunting that a true sense of sporting journalism started to appear in the Tipperary press. Previously, anonymously contributed articles reported sporting events. As has been shown in Chapter Three, the appearance of 'Larky Grigg' as a 'special correspondent' to the *Clonmel Chronicle*, where dedicated column inches were afforded to the hunt community, was a reflection of the popularity of hunt reports in the local press. Other pseudonymous writers followed, but 'Grigg' was to continue, with his reporting of hunt meets, to the end of the century. He may have been a correspondent, but he was certainly knowledgeable. This suggests he was an insider.

For the most part, recreational sport in Tipperary mirrored that what was happening on the British mainland. An example of this is the initial promotion of archery, which gave way to croquet, which in turn gave way to lawn tennis. This also happened in central Scotland, where 'at one time or another most of the region's major sporting activities were affected adversely by competition from a temporarily more successful rival'.[2] All chapters demonstrate a sporting influence which had its origin in England. This is especially apparent in Chapter Two where country house recreational sport was reflective of that which took place in estates and demesnes in Britain.

[2] Tranter, 'The chronology of organized sport. II-causes', p. 365.

This thesis has shown that the sports of hunting to hounds, horse racing and cricket enjoyed the patronage of the landed, propertied and military classes, in contrast to hurling, which was a game of the ordinary man and was frequently violent and without any permanent or prescribed playing areas. Whereas the three former sports, and other lawn games which emerged during the era of this thesis, followed a structure and format which were in many ways the building blocks of codification, hurling was still volatile and unregulated.

What the thesis also shows, is that there was a take-off period, in the mid 1860s, when the level of sporting activity became more pronounced. An increase countrywide in cricket participation, with four cricket clubs being established in Clonmel alone in 1864, and an upturn in the number of horse race meetings and fox/hare hunting meetings,serve to indicate that a defining period had arrived in the evolution of Tipperary sport. There was an appetite for recreational sport and this was also evident in the level of reporting.

All chapters demonstrate the importance of the military to the promotion of recreational sport in Tipperary. The level of support which the officer class gave to all sports was an indication of the relative security which they enjoyed in rural Ireland. A posting in southern Ireland was one of three postings which artillery field officers could receive.[3] The other two postings were in India or the south of England, alternating between Woolwich, Aldershot and Salisbury Plain. Officers, sent to southern Ireland, 'enjoyed hunting and all sports'. A combination of key individuals and military officers ensured that recreational sport would continue to prosper. The evidence suggests that what was happening in Tipperary in the middle of the 1860s was a reflection of the diffusion of sport nationally and internationally. This was also clearly evident in Co. Westmeath. The military, in promoting and sustaining,

[3] Brigadier A.G. Hewson, M.C. *Memoirs of a regimental officer* (London, 1970), p. 19.

the growth of sport in Tipperary, were in essence replicating what was happening elsewhere in the country. As well as being agents of law and order, they were also agents of sporting diffusion. They were as instrumental in this diffusion in Tipperary as they were in Westmeath, or in any part of the British Empire.[4] Officers soon discovered that life in the army varied little, no matter the location. Percival Marling, of the 18th Hussars recounted that there was hunting six days a week in Cahir, with a drag on Sunday, in the 1880s. When he was transferred to Aldershot, apart from one route march per week, they 'were hunting five and six days a week'.[5]

Chapter Five shows, how, in the athletic arena there was no great distinction between what may have been perceived as an amateur ethos as opposed to a pay for play concept. In the overall economy of sport, decisions were made on a pragmatic and economic basis. Hence, Richard St. John was willing and able to travel the county to compete in various athletic events and accrue enough from his winnings, to enhance his livelihood. Similarly, the Clonmel Rowing Club, though principally comprised of amateur rowers, engaged a professional trainer to coach and train the crews. It was a move which was to reap dividends for the club.

As outlined at the commencement of the introduction, the intrinsic element of pre-codified sport in Tipperary was that it was organised along class lines. In Tipperary, it was as much 'a product and a reflection of social class,' as it was in Great Britain.[6] Sport was principally for the moneyed leisured. The shift came with the transition from pre-modern to modern sport, which resulted in some class elements becoming weakened, though remaining strong in lawn

[4] Hunt. *Sport and society*, pp 171-3. Mason and Riedi. *Sport and the military*, pp 35-7.
[5] Mason and Riedi, *Sport and the military*, p.52.
[6] Huggins. *The Victorians and sport*, p. 19.

tennis, rugby football and golf. Once sport became codified, other pastimes took note and in order to attract participants, also began to draw up codes. Cycling is a prime example of this process.[7] What sport also gave to many was a sense of identity. Townland names typically became a feature of cricket playing, denoting the origin or base of a team. This was at level beneath that of the parish, which became and still remains a core element of club toponomy in the GAA. As Tom Hayes has noted, sport 'enhanced a growing appreciation of borders and divisions between parishes, districts, unions, counties, provinces and countries'.[8]

In Victorian Tipperary there was a very limited industrial base and therefore little in the way of factory life to prompt the working class to seek the escape of sporting recreation. This was a situation unlike that of the mill workers of Leeds and Bolton, who found respite on the soccer field, or unlike the assembly line workers in America, who had baseball as a relief.[9] In Tipperary, and throughout much of rural Ireland, the tenant farmer class dominated the Gaelic fields, participating in sports, which were derived from a nationalist ideology. The ideological differences meant that the newly codified Irish sports were to become virtually unique among international games which, as Richard Holt has commented, are 'arguably the most striking instance of politics shaping sport in modern history'.[10]

Gender related issues did not arise in the course of the research. In common with the findings of Hunt for Westmeath, female participation was drawn from the upper and middle classes of Victorian Tipperary.[11] While the nature of the language was sexist, this was typical of the style of reports submitted to the contemporary press. Sport was a social occasion and for

[7] For example see Brian Griffin. 'Cycling an gender in Victorian Ireland' in *Éire-Ireland*. Vol. 41, No. 1. (Spring 2006), pp 213-241.
[8] Hayes. 'From ludicrous to logical', p. 265.
[9] Guttman. *From ritual to record*, p. 59.
[10] Holt. *Sport and the British*, p. 240.
[11] Hunt. 'The development of sport in County Westmeath', p. 307.

many families it presented ideal opportunities, not only to maintain links with peers, but also, to cultivate new links with potential marriage partners. The pioneering paths made by these women, paved the way for sport to become acceptable and fashionable for their female descendants. One of these was Helena Rice, from New Inn. She had commenced playing lawn tennis tournaments around the county in conjunction with other members of her family.[12] In 1890, she became the first, and only ever, Irish winner of the Wimbledon lawn tennis tournament for male or female participants.[13]

This thesis complements the pioneering work of Tom Hunt for Co. Westmeath, in chronicling the growth and development of sport in a rural, non-industrial Victorian society. Sport as a social, cultural and economic construct has been investigated at a micro-level and, in conjunction with Hunt's work, this thesis increases our understanding of how sport came to be an essential part of the lives of many people. Both studies are similar, in that there was a common finding: – the origin, patronage and support for recreational sport came from the landed, propertied, business and military officer classes. My study adds to the historiography of sport in Ireland, by including pre- and post-Famine sport, and demonstrates that, while the country was undergoing great upheaval, sport still continued, just as life did. The tide of emigration that followed the Famine was hugely consequential. The absence of the ordinary man and woman from the race course was especially noticed as falling attendances impacted on the financial return, something which was not as severe in Westmeath.[14]

There is a debate about the Great Famine as a watershed, that everything was different after it. This thesis begins at 1840 and by including the Famine allows for both the impact of that

[12] *Clonmel Chronicle*, 22 Sept. 1880; 30 Aug. 1882. *Tipperary Leader*, 25 Aug. 1883.
[13] Charles Landon. *Classic moments of Wimbledon* (Frome, 1982), p. 13.
[14] For example, from 1851 to 1881, emigration from Tipperary stood at 154,802 persons, while for Westmeath the figure stood at 37,234. Vaughan and Fitzpatrick. *Population, 1821-1971*, pp 290-91, 306-07.

catastrophe on sport and the ongoing consequences of the Great Hunger. Hunt's study of Westmeath began at 1850, which allowed for a study of the consequences of the Famine on sport, but not how the Famine itself impacted.[15] Dealing with the decade from 1840 three primary sources were available: two local newspapers (Clonmel and Nenagh) and Ordnance Survey maps, and from these something of the impact of the Famine on sport in the county could be understood. It was striking that during the dreadful forties elite sports continued, unaffected by the potato blight. While the evidence is not there, common sense mandates the view that the millions of a pauperised population had more on their minds that recreational sport.

This study makes clear that sport evolves in a rural community like Tipperary very differently from an industrialised and urban community as found in mainland Britain. In Britain sport developed with the promotion and encouragement of a wide spectrum: mill owners, publicans, public schools, business men, estate owners, Christian groups, etc. In Tipperary, in contrast, the spectrum of support was much narrower and in addition was increasingly politically suspect. As Comerford observed, 'the institutionalisation of sport occurred within a society constructed along lines of entrenched social class'.[16] Emulation, ordinary people copying their 'betters' in sport as in life, was an important aspect of diffusion. It could equally be tea drinking out of china cups as much as it was the promotion of sport.

This thesis demonstrates that sport in Co. Tipperary originated from an elite-centred and primarily exclusive social group. It complements the national study of sport by James Kelly and fills the gap from 1840 to the years preceding the foundation of the GAA, though albeit

[15] Examples are F.S.L. Lyons. *Ireland since the famine* (reprint London, 1973); James O'Shea. *Priest, politics and society in post-famine Ireland: a study of county Tipperary 1850-1891* (Dublin, 1983); Central Statistics Office. *Farming since the famine: Irish farm statistics, 1847-1996* (Dublin, 1997).
[16] R.V. Comerford. *Ireland: inventing the nation* (London, 2001), p. 218.

from a county perspective. In Tipperary, recreational sports were refined and codified before they made the jump to general acceptance amongst the masses. A Victorian dislike of cruel, barbaric recreations such as bull-baiting and cock-fighting meant that these were removed from the new social order, mindful that those who were objecting to them – the elite – were, in the eighteenth century, regularly some of their principal supporters.[17] Essentially, the picture which emerged in Tipperary in the mid-nineteenth century is one which mirrored Great Britain as a whole, whereby sport was governed through the agencies of private clubs, such as the Marylebone Cricket Club, the Jockey Club, and the Royal and Ancient Golf Club.

In the context of the evolution of recreational sport in Ireland at a micro-level, this thesis has embraced all aspects of social life in Victorian Tipperary. It has clearly shown how the elite were responsible for the proliferation and promotion of sport and its ethos. The appetite for sport, which these men and women displayed, laid the foundation for their associates and subordinates to follow. In the private setting of a demesne, the building blocks of sport were unwittingly laid. Sport was for now. As sport crossed the divide from private to public, its diffusion to the wider community of Tipperary coincided with the emergence of codified team sports in England. The appearance of these team sports in Tipperary, and in Ireland generally, would lead to the awakening of national consciousness which, in turn, would result in the codification of the uniquely Irish field games of hurling and Gaelic football and the foundation Gaelic Athletic Association.

[17] 'Royal sport of cock fighting' was how an advertisement for a cock fight in Wexford, in 1778 for 200 guineas was promoted, *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 6 June 1778; Cock fight in Durrow, Co. Laois for 40 guineas, *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 19 July 1794. For an overview of cock fighting in the eighteenth century see Chapter 3 'Cockfighting' in Kelly. *Sport in Ireland*, pp 157-206.

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